

INVESTIGATING THE USE OF A SOCIAL NETWORKING SITE IN THE FACILITATION OF INTERNATIONALISATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION



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Confidentiality Statement

This thesis entitled *Investigating the use of a Social Networking Site in the Facilitation of Internationalisation in Higher Education* is not confidential.

Abstract

Internationalisation is the movement of people, their belief systems, culture, technologies, education, concerns and economy across geographical borders but where the national higher education system boundaries remain intact. Internationalisation is a growing area in world-wide higher education. To respond to the challenges of internationalisation, universities need to ensure that the service to international students is improved. In order for local and international students to develop into responsible global citizens, they need to understand diverse cultures and be able to relate appropriately to individuals from different backgrounds. Both local and international students, therefore, need to interact while they are on the university campus together. However, international students tend to interact only within their own cohorts, and local students do not see the value in building relationships with international students who may not remain in the country once they graduate. International students leave the university wishing that they had made more local friends and had learned more about the cultures of the country in which they had studied.

To respond to the problem of getting local and international student to interact more, a virtual environment on the SNS Facebook was proposed as a safe space for the students, and other key stakeholders, to network. A Facebook Page called IAPO @ UCT was set up by the International Academic Programmes Office (IAPO) - an administrative department at the University of Cape Town (UCT) - in order to provide IAPO stakeholders with an online community in which to interact. The page was set up and monitored over a two and a half year period to see what types of interactions would occur.

Actor Network Theory (ANT) was used as the main, high level lens for analysing the interactions on IAPO @ UCT. Certain concepts from the theories of Networking, Social Capital, Social Presence and Social Identity were further used to scrutinise and explain the actions of the Page Poster on IAPO @ UCT.

IAPO @ UCT was able to facilitate internationalisation at UCT as there was evidence in the page posts that key stakeholders were interacting with each other online. Supernodes were identified who could increase the dissemination of information on the page, and the value of offline events was highlighted as a means for increasing student participation both off- and online. IAPO branding and inclusion of

student assistance in events was suggested in order to increase a sense of belonging to IAPO @ UCT. In addition, the effect of deleting posts and hiding comments was discussed with regard to the building of trustworthiness within the online community.

Key Words

Actor Network Theory, Culture, Higher Education, Facebook, Internationalisation, Social Capital, Social Identity, Social Networking Sites, Social Networking Theory, Social Presence, Virtual Community, Web 2.0

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background

Internationalisation is the movement of people, their belief systems, culture, technologies, education, concerns and economy across geographical borders but where the national higher education system boundaries remain intact (Knight, 1999; Teichler, 2004). Therefore, internationalisation needs to be based on mutual understanding and not merely driven by profit incentives (Enders, 2004; Knight, 2013). The demand for internationalisation in higher education is insatiable in the world-wide market place as internationalisation has grown dramatically in scope, scale and importance (Altbach & Knight, 2006; Knight, 2013). To enable the growth of internationalisation, higher education institutions (HEI)s need to embrace Information and Communication Technology (ICT) so that a new generation of students can communicate more effectively. Social Networking Sites (SNS), as an ICT, are readily embraced by students and they hold the possibility to further internationalisation efforts (Cooke, 2008). Little research has addressed the possibility of using a SNS for anything more than student recruitment in administration or for online learning in the academic realm of Higher Education (HE) (Arquero & Romero-Frias, 2013; Bryant, 2006; Denison & Johanson, 2007; Koh, Kim, Butler, & Bock, 2007) therefore forming a gap in the research. There is also insufficient research into the potential of Web 2.0 to increase the interaction between students in HE, and previous research has suggested that the use of a SNS like Facebook can assist in building a community of students (Azab, 2012; Barczyk & Duncan, 2013).

To gain a competitive advantage over other HEIs as well as to provide a quality service to existing HE students, both local and international, HEIs need to relate to their students on a SNS platform that is appropriate and accessible to them (Arkoudis, et al., 2013; Hall & Justus, 2013). Recently, the use of Web 2.0 to enhance the HE experience has become significant in developed as well as developing countries; however, there is a gap in the research on the use of Web 2.0 in HE in developing countries (Mutohar & Hughesm, 2012). Due to the lack of research in Web 2.0

in HE in developing countries like South Africa, it is imperative that more research is conducted (Mutohar & Hughesm, 2012).

1.2 Purpose

The goal of this research is to investigate the use of SNS to facilitate internationalisation in HE. The first step involved the researcher setting up a virtual community in a SNS and observing the online interactions (while describing them in terms from different theories) between local and international actors to ascertain if the SNS is facilitating the integration of the international actors into the local campus community. The researcher set up a virtual community within a SNS (using the virtual community stimulation structure) at a university that would enable participants to communicate and participate in on- and offline activities and events, and to invite international and local students as well as staff actors to the virtual community.

The objective of this research is therefore to:

- Observe and document interactions of the actors in the online environment using ANT, Social Networking Theory, the Theory of Social Capital, Social Identity Theory and the Theory of Social Presence to categorise and analyse the interactions in relation to the concepts of these theories and therefore to ascertain if a SNS can aid internationalisation in HE.

The use of SNS for online education will, however, not be addressed in this research as it falls outside the scope of the research objectives.

1.3 Theories

Five theories were employed to analyse the activity on an SNS to ascertain if its use could aid internationalisation in higher education. Actor Network Theory (ANT), as the main theory for analysis, was employed as it is a method that treats technical and social actors in the same way, which is useful for a virtual environment as it is difficult to separate the social and the technical interactions on a SNS (Tatnall & Gilding, 1999). The rest of the theories formed minor roles in the analysis. Networking Theory was used as a lens with which to observe actors as weak or

strong nodes where the dissemination of information and general communication aspects to the SNS came into play (Granovetter, 1973). The Theory of Social Capital was used as an additional lens to focus on whether or not the actors interacted with other actors (who were their peers or are from another generation), whether social capital forms between such actors, and if a certain amount of closure of the network occurred (Coleman, 1988). The theories of Social Presence and Social Identity formed minor roles in the observation to ascertain whether or not actors become aware of their presence and that of fellow actors within the SNS (Butler, 2001) and if they begin to identify themselves as a part of a group (Hogg, 2006). These five theories were taken into consideration when analysing data from the case study; however, ANT was used as the main theory of analysis while certain concepts were used for additional analysis using concepts from the remaining four theories.

1.4 Overview of the Methodology

The theories mentioned in 1.3 above were employed to answer the research question of: How could the use of a SNS facilitate internationalisation in a HEI? Due to the lack of research into the use of a SNS in developing countries in a HE environment, this research will attempt to create insight into how a SNS could be used to integrate international students into a campus community. The researcher set up a page on a SNS for a department at a university in a developing country. The researcher then analysed the interactions of actors on the page over two years through the various theoretical lenses addressed in section 1.3. The researcher was able to see what kind of interactions took place in the online environment and was able to suggest how these kinds of interactions could be improved or increased in the future.

1.5 Outline of the Thesis

The thesis commences with a literature review that addresses issues within internationalisation in a higher education environment, examining the possibilities in HE for the use of ICT and Web 2.0 as a platform for the interaction of different actors in an online environment such as SNS. Following the literature review, theories (for their use as lenses in the research) such as ANT, Social Capital, Social Networking, Social Identity and Social Presence are described. The

research questions then ensue as they stem from the theories and are based on areas of interest addressed in the literature review.

The section containing the methodology follows the theories. The methodology section is set out in sub-sections addressing the philosophy, approach, strategy, timeframe, SNS questionnaire, data collection, setting up the Facebook page, data analysis techniques, coding procedure for Facebook page posts, ethical issues and limitations to the research. The case study, which is set at the International Academic Programmes Office (IAPO) at the University of Cape Town (UCT), is described, focussing on the different stakeholders involved in the case study. After the case study, the different theoretical lenses are used to describe what occurred in the online environment over a two year and a half period. A discussion of the findings ensues and conclusions are made by the researcher with regard to the outcomes of the research and suggestions for further research are provided.

2 Literature Review

2.1 Internationalisation in Higher Education

International is sometimes used as a more politically correct word than *overseas* or *foreign* to distinguish local students from students from other countries. *International* is also used as a word that has been linked to the HEI having a world class reputation (Harris, 2008). HEI have been international since Medieval Europe because travel was a part of an academic's professional development and because students needed to access distant libraries (Altbach & Knight, 2006; Enders, 2004; Harris, 2008). In those times, there was an admiration of cosmopolitan values and international recognition led to pride and reputation within fields (Enders, 2004). However, the contemporary HEI was not founded on medieval society, but on the nation-state and nationalisation after the Protestant Reformation. HEI then focused inwardly on nation-building (Altbach & Knight, 2006; Enders, 2004). This nation-state only opened up to science and technology after there were national economic incentives during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. HEI then, and currently, remain mainly national in nature with regard to policy, regulations, funding and culture. However, internationalisation and globalisation challenge the nation state (Enders, 2004). The knowledge generated by HEI is, to a large extent, universal and this information generation is sourced throughout the world in order to remain innovative. Coupled with this, communication across borders and an international reputation are still equated with high quality in academia (Teichler, 2004). These national HEI systems are therefore challenged by internationalisation as they have to respond to external forces, such as the global economy, yet must also actively add to internationalisation from their knowledge generation activities (Enders, 2004).

Terms that end in *-sation* within higher education, such as internationalisation, usually indicate an area for improvement. Internationalisation has, unfortunately, been linked to unfavourable activities such as the devastation of culture, the abating of language variety and the downward fall of quality in higher education (Teichler, 2004). More recently, internationalisation has been linked to lowered academic standards, visa factories, diploma mills and double accreditation (Knight, 2013). However, the distinction between internationalisation and globalisation in higher

education sheds light on the opportunities that internationalisation presents as opposed to some of the pitfalls of globalisation (Teichler, 2004).

Higher education becomes a part of globalisation as supply and demand transcend borders and where there is a blurring or vanishing of national lines during border-crossing activities (Qiang, 2003; Teichler, 2004). However, internationalisation embodies a country's response to globalisation in a way that ensures that the individuality of the nation remains integral (Knight, 1999; Qiang, 2003). A definition of internationalisation is the movement of people, their belief systems, culture, technologies, education, concerns and economy across geographical borders but where the national higher education system boundaries remain intact (Knight, 1999; Teichler, 2004). Therefore, internationalisation needs to be based on mutual understanding and not merely driven by profit incentives (Enders, 2004; Knight, 2013).

Internationalisation within HEI has amplified in terms of complexity, scope and volume in the last thirty years (Altbach & Knight, 2006; Knight, 2013). There is a large and currently insatiable demand for higher education in developing countries (Cooke, 2008; Zeleza, 2012). Excluding South Africa, Africa has the least amount of international partnerships (Altbach & Knight, 2006). International programmes offered in South Africa have declined because of stringent government policies and the accreditation process (Altbach & Knight, 2006; Zeleza, 2012). A HEI needs to decide how it will implement internationalisation so that it aligns with the institutional strategy and supports the institutional mission, programmes, students and resources. Internationalisation is important to HEI so that their alumni can leave with a well-rounded international education that has empowered them to become socially responsible, to be able to form partnerships and links with key international partners, and to possibly engender additional revenue for the HEI. In its many facets, HE has become a key driver of change (Hall & Justus, 2013).

2.1.1 International Students

The increase in international student numbers has the potential to improve the cognitive ability as well as learning opportunities for both local and international students (Arkoudis, et al., 2013). International students desire integration into not only the learning environment of the campus but

also into the social and cultural interaction that learning at a foreign university has the potential to provide (Rienties, Grohnert, Kommers, Niemantsverdriet, & Nijhuis, 2011). Unfortunately, research indicates that there is limited communication between local and international students (Arkoudis, et al., 2013). Students who learn from their peers benefit from a sense of belonging to the HEI which positively affects learning and student retention (Arkoudis, et al., 2013). Students do not necessarily learn and work with their peers unless they are encouraged to do so (Arkoudis, et al., 2013; McCarthy, 2013). International students usually feel more comfortable with students who speak their own first language or come from the same country that they do. Interestingly, international students are more comfortable interacting with other international students, regardless of their country of origin, than with local students (Arkoudis, et al., 2013). International students feel they do not have enough opportunities to interact with the local students (Arkoudis, et al., 2013; Mthenthe, 2010). In order to gain intercultural competence and understanding, students need to know themselves, their culture, language and beliefs. In addition, students need to learn about different cultures, languages and beliefs through discussion, research, and interactions with students from different backgrounds or countries with a non-judgmental, open mind (Arkoudis, et al., 2013; Hall & Justus, 2013).

Students are now more interested in advanced technologies, such as Web 2.0, that can develop their research and creative thinking skills as well as their global and cultural appreciation and competence which are sought-after skills in the global workplace. Web 2.0 allows HE practitioners to provide a student-centred service that students are comfortable and confident in using, and that facilitate creative and first-hand experience in cross-cultural skills that they would like to engender. Web 2.0 is especially useful to international students because services can be delivered on demand anywhere in the world, even before they reach the HEI. Besides authentic and trusting relationships based on mutual respect, effective intercultural communication relies on knowledge sharing (Hall & Justus, 2013; McCarthy, 2013). Web 2.0 technologies give students the space and opportunity to communicate outside the set structure of the lecture rooms (Hall & Justus, 2013). The use of Web 2.0 in HE encourages collaboration by providing a platform for students to express themselves and to discuss issues while creating and sharing

novel information that expands their cultural beliefs (Azab, 2012). Web 2.0 technology has been recommended for use in uncertain or complex environments (Hasan & Pfaff, 2012).

2.2 Web 2.0 in Higher Education

Web 2.0 evolved from the static Web 1.0 into an interlinked, participative and collaborative online platform (Podobnik, Ackerman, Grubisic, & Lovrek, 2012; Stevenson & van Belle, 2012). Web 1.0 was based on Hypertext Mark-up Language (HTML) which was used by experts to disseminate information to a wide audience as a form of one-way, read-only communication (Mutohar & Hughesm, 2012). A definition of Web 2.0 is a set of technologies which form a platform enabling increased social interaction where participants are able to contribute to and alter the information presented on the platform (Azab & Khalifa, 2012; Hack, 2013). Web 2.0 is sometimes defined as the next generation web because it allows participatory information sharing where the users are the main content creators (Mutohar & Hughesm, 2012). Web 2.0 technologies, such as SNSs, wikis, blogs, content communities and virtual worlds, are innately interactive in nature which means that the user forms a part of the online experience through responding and contributing to content (Azab & Khalifa, 2012; Bugeja, 2006; Cooke, 2008; Hack, 2013).

Web 2.0 is based on a comparatively simple technology platform but the power lies in the way that it allows people to interact online in a way that has never happened before. Organisations can transform and benefit through the effective use of Web 2.0 (Azab, 2012). Web 2.0 allows organisations to augment their marketing activities by providing a platform for dialogue with customers in order to improve customer service at low cost and with wide-reaching effects (Azab, 2012; Podobnik et al., 2012). Web 2.0 allows participation not only by, but also between, partners, suppliers and employees within the organisation. Web 2.0 reduces the boundaries between the internal and external realms of the organisation which results in more open communication and facilitates a culture of innovation and learning. Customers learn more about organisational products and service, empowering them to lend their advice on product and service development. Potential customers can decide what products and services to purchase based on the ratings and reviews of previous customers (Azab, 2012).

A challenge for Web 2.0 technologies is that merely creating them will not ensure their success. Web 2.0 technologies require user participation through content creation and, above all, the users need to value the technology enough to use it for more than private communication and entertainment (Azab, 2012; McCarthy, 2013). Some users do not associate social media with education, or with any serious application, and treat it as a private tool to use with their peers only. There are certain users who do not want their private profiles on social media to intermingle with their study or work (Skeels & Grudin, 2009). However, there is great potential for Web 2.0 in a developing country like South Africa because Web 2.0 can increase productivity, minimise costs, create novel economic opportunities, create jobs and encourage innovation, trade and international collaboration. Furthermore, as Web 2.0 technologies become more popular, increasing numbers of people become interested in using them thus decreasing the digital divide. Web 2.0 technologies encourage information sharing, openness, trust, collaboration and participation enabling people from developing countries to become empowered through participation in the innovation as opposed to being inactive receivers (Azab, 2012). Barriers to using Web 2.0 in developing countries include the lack of computers and/or access to the internet (Mutohar & Hughesm, 2012).

Due to the swift development and distribution of Web 2.0 technologies, education organisations have begun to use these technologies in developing countries (Mutohar & Hughesm, 2012). HE students use the internet as an integral part of their everyday social lives in the way that former generations received television and radio (Cooke, 2008; McCarthy, 2013). Students are at ease with using SNS such as Facebook and other popular web 2.0 utilities. The Vice Chancellor of the Open University in the United Kingdom stated that:

“Web 2.0... is an interactive, participatory experience....[which] ...gives a whole new meaning to ‘community of scholars’ and a whole new dimension to ‘internationalisation’.” (Professor Brenda Gourley in (Cooke, 2008, p. C12)).

Web 2.0 is increasingly being used to foster international interaction in HE as it provides students with a plethora of options to connect to and collaborate with each other (Hall & Justus,

2013). An important focus of HE is to equip students with the necessary tools for their chosen careers, to foster their personal development and to prepare them to positively affect society (Fernández, et al., 2013). The use of new technologies, such as Web 2.0, provide the tools for creativity and innovation which are fundamental building blocks for educational success (Fernández, et al., 2013; McCarthy, 2013). There is insufficient research into the potential of Web 2.0 to increase the interaction between students in HE, and previous research has suggested that the use of a SNS like Facebook can assist in building a community of students (Azab, 2012; Barczyk & Duncan, 2013).

2.3 Social Networking Sites

SNS have become highly fashionable since 2007 and have overtaken email as the most common online activity, with many users logging in many times a day (Boyd & Ellison, 2007; Joinson, 2008; Benevenuto, Rodrigues, Cha, & Almeida, 2009; McCarthy, 2013). SNS are Web 2.0 internet platforms that enable individuals to build online profiles for themselves, make connections to other users of the SNS as well as see what their connections, and the further linkages of these connections, are posting on the SNS (Boyd & Ellison, 2007; Joinson, 2008; Pimenta et. al, 2012). Individuals portray their digital identities on public, semi-private and private profiles in formal and informal SNS (Mutohar & Hughesm, 2012). There are many different types of SNS that aim to connect individuals who share similar interests (Pimenta et al., 2012).

Social networks become viewable in a SNS environment enabling individuals to create links to other individuals that would not have been made offline as well as increasing contact between individuals who share an existing offline connection (Boyd & Ellison, 2007). SNS also encourages different types of interaction than would be available in an offline only environment (Saw, Abbott, Donaghey, & McDonald, 2013). SNS create global linkages at a rate that has never been seen before, cutting through language and cultural barriers (Podobnik et al., 2012). SNS have become an essential component of the Net Generation (Saw et al., 2013).

SNS and their use in internationalisation in higher education has already been suggested as a possible tool for student recruitment (Choudaha, 2010) as well as a means of creating groups of alumni and colleagues throughout the world (Ng & Wallace, 2010). Although there are a few obstacles that will require thought, such as dealing with the cultural differences of students sensitively and developing the right kind of SNS tools and identity management, these issues do not only affect HEI and have been successfully implemented by some HEI, such as the University of Phoenix (Cooke, 2008).

HEI are putting more energy into improving customer service to international students, especially in their first year, in order to improve the international student experience and to attract more international students through word of mouth (McCarthy, 2013; Saw et al, 2013). Administrative departments in HE have an important role in acclimatising international students to their local campus community by informing them about where to locate information and university services (Mthenthe, 2010; Saw et al., 2013). Administrative departments provide a hub for international students to collaborate and interact with other students at the university. Administrative departments can make use of SNS to reach out and engage with international students and aid their interaction with each other as well as with the local student and staff body. International students who use the internet at their host university are more likely to form interactions and friendships with other international students (Saw et al., 2013).

SNS can be used by administrative departments in HE as students will not see an administrative department as invading their social space by having a presence on a SNS. This is because SNS have become more than social platforms as there is increased information sharing and collaboration occurring. Students use SNS for information gathering and sharing whether the HEI encourages it or not. Students who use the SNS Facebook merely for social activities earned lower grades than the students who used the SNS for knowledge gathering and sharing (McCarthy, 2013; Saw et al, 2013).

The use of the SNS Facebook aids international students in participating socially and culturally at their host university, interacting with the local students online and also adjusting to academic study. Students and academics use SNS to connect and communicate with each other as a part of

their already-formed digital lifestyles where they are frequently online and can connect with each other in an informal environment. Students who are not yet comfortable interacting in the offline campus community environment can interact with other students and staff in an online environment that they are already familiar with (Saw et al., 2013).

International students use SNS for connecting socially to family and friends by chatting and keeping up with their activities but most of them also use SNS for group work, validating ideas and gathering information. Through understanding how SNS are used, HEI departments can consider which SNS would provide purposeful engagement with their target audiences. Administrative departments in HEI need to think differently about how to offer key services and communication to students, as well as how interaction will occur in a virtual community of staff and students (Saw et al., 2013).

Administrative HEI departments, such as libraries, use SNS as a marketing tool to disseminate information. SNS are vital platforms that can be used for participation and collaboration as well as to send out information and create engagement which will assist to construct enhanced relationships with international and local students. There is an opportunity for administrative staff to interact with students online to communicate about services of use to the students. The SNS Facebook can be used to discuss topics and allows participation in a more interactive and personalised manner (Saw et al., 2013).

Facebook has been found to be the SNS of choice for local and international students in other case studies, and it is also the site that was used for the largest range of different online activities (McCarthy, 2013; Saw et al., 2013). The SNS Facebook could be a valuable and exciting tool in HE because of its popularity and familiarity with students. Facebook can improve the student learning experience, as well as extra-curricular learning, by increasing informal communication between students. Facebook is often preferred over traditional HE online learning tools because students are already using Facebook before they get into the HEI and therefore know how to navigate their way around Facebook. If the potential of Facebook is used effectively, the SNS could be utilized to build a virtual campus community (Barczyk & Duncan, 2013).

2.3.1 Virtual Communities

Communities that make use of the internet as their primary form of communication are referred to as online or virtual communities (Pimenta et al., 2012). Virtual communities originated in the early 1990s and, since then, the internet has abounded with them (Koh et al., 2007; Schauder, Stillman, & Johanson, 2005). A SNS is a type of virtual community that is purely computer-based and where interaction occurs online; however, some members use virtual communities to engage in offline relations as well (De Maggio, Gloor, & Passiante, 2009; Koh et al., 2007). A virtual community is a social network comprised of individuals who intermingle via online media, crosscutting traditional location and political boundaries, with the aim of achieving common interests or goals. SNS are one of the most ubiquitous forms of virtual communities of which many contain numerous smaller subsets of virtual communities (Pimenta et al., 2012).

A virtual community is a group whose members communicate about a common interest, goal or idea to build relationships and perform transactions (Koh et al., 2007). Communities are useful as they aid individuals in getting to know other community members, knowledge sharing, augmenting offline social events, garnering agreement over issues, and generally supporting everyday offline activities through an online platform (Pimenta et al., 2012). International computer networks have led to the increased interest in virtual communities and how these will affect how individuals live, work and communicate with each other (Pimenta et al., 2012).

The modern notion of a community is founded on a situation in which individuals interact socially as they share a space and hopefully some common goals. Relationships between individuals are forged as information is shared between and amongst them. If individuals are members of the same community, they are able to influence each other through direct or indirect (public) communication (Pimenta et al., 2012).

A fundamental cornerstone of communities is that individuals volunteer to associate themselves with the community and all the individuals benefit from their affiliation to the community. Individuals within a community share common interests or preferences but they do not necessarily share a common goal; therefore, the interactions between community members is mostly ad hoc. Community members may not know each other in an offline environment and

their personal interests therefore may be more important to them than the interests of the community interests. In order for a virtual community to be successful, it needs to motivate community members to participate in online activities (Pimenta et al., 2012).

Virtual environments need to be built in order to support interaction and informal communication online. A significant collaborative network relies on the ties that are formed by individuals who form the network. Weak ties bring novel information into a network and promote informal sharing. Organisational structures are often rigid and information becomes compartmentalised between strong ties within existing teams. Weak ties are formed where there are interactions outside of the organisational structure or existing teams, and they therefore need to be encouraged to ensure that more naturally formed ties are made and enter the network through informal information sharing. Informal communication creates a space for individuals to participate in the organisational culture and feel a part of the organisation which, in turn, yields benefits to the relationships between the community members. The way that community members view each other and feel connected to each other is a relational benefit positively affected by informal communication. Community members benefit from informal communication due to the knowledge that they are able to acquire from the SNS (Stevenson & van Belle, 2012).

Virtual communities have been shown to be advantageous when there is an unforeseen strategic direction within an institution or when instant action is needed to help the institution respond and adjust to external circumstances, such as internationalisation (Cooke, 2008; De Maggio et al., 2009). Institutions that are globalised require Web 2.0 more than those that are not because it is more difficult to get stakeholders to interact in a face to face environment. Trust between stakeholders is essential to successful online collaboration (Stevenson & van Belle, 2012). Using SNS, interaction and learning can occur when users are from different countries or organisations (Koh et al., 2007). To reduce culture shock, SNS can even be used to orientate international students before they leave their home countries through partnerships with their local universities (Bryant, 2006). SNS can therefore aid institutions in achieving their internationalisation goals (Denison & Johanson, 2007).

2.3.2 Building a Virtual Community

The involvement of community leaders is essential in instigating relationship building and content generation in building the foundation of a virtual community. Community leaders need to provide a clear vision for the community, in order to support the stimulation of trust and therefore increase participation. The contribution of community leaders is therefore vital for nurturing dynamic member participation with regard to instigating the formative posting and viewing of content in the virtual community (Koh et al., 2007).

2.3.2.1 Leaders

Most virtual communities have a flexible management structure, where there is an absence of a hierarchy of responsibilities. Permanent leaders should be appointed in order to ensure the continued success of the virtual community. These leaders will be more focused in carrying out the common goals of the community. The leaders need to make sure that they provide an adequate ICT and cultural exchange infrastructure so that personal development within the community occurs. Effective leaders will more effectively recognise the posted content of community members, provide guidance, and foster social identity (De Maggio et al., 2009). Another difficulty is for community leaders to agree on universal goals for the virtual community that is comprised of diverse members in relation to culture, age, education and work professions. It is challenging to encourage members who are not in the same geographical region to dynamically interact in the virtual community. Community leaders have the added responsibility of creating a desirable social climate and fostering social capital to encourage the participation of the community members. Therefore, multifaceted strategies need to be employed in order to build virtual communities (Koh et al., 2007).

2.3.2.2 Cultural Diversity

Cultural diversity within a virtual community creates the opportunity for different and original viewpoints as well as for more sources of information which can translate to a competitive advantage over closed communities. The cultural diversity of community members can occur when members are from different countries, are different ages, have different educational or professional backgrounds, or work for different institutions. Friendly access allows members

from different sources to join the virtual community. When members come from multiple backgrounds, this enhances their individuality and adds to the creativity within the community (De Maggio et al., 2009).

2.3.2.3 Membership

Virtual communities are usually open which means that there is less control over members and that they can grow to large numbers quite quickly. New members to the virtual community are important because they are a great source of novel and creative input as they see content from different viewpoints and through different cultural lenses (De Maggio et al., 2009). However, caution must prevail so that the new members do not breach the trust between established community members since they will not have formed a part of the trusted network yet (Coleman, 1988; De Maggio et al., 2009).

Virtual communities grow through a process of natural selection where individuals who become aware of the common goals of the community, the tools available in the community and the desired benefits of the community, will volunteer to become part of the community. Members who realise that they are not receiving value from posts and are not collaborating with the virtual community tend to leave (De Maggio et al., 2009; Koh et al., 2007). The fluid rate of membership is the reason why virtual communities have a high turnover rate (De Maggio et al., 2009).

The membership of a virtual community can be suggested by an institution through sponsorship, but voluntary members tend to be more active within a virtual community and they, therefore, embody a more open and free membership structure. If a virtual community relies too heavily on an institutional structure, the institutional culture, policies and procedures can inhibit innovativeness and creativity and can adversely affect the survival of the community. However, institutional sponsorship of a virtual community can embody different structures ranging from total independence to total institutionalisation of the virtual community to somewhere in the middle-ground where there is some support from the institution coupled with a degree of membership autonomy. The degree of institutional involvement is an important issue for

community leaders to take into consideration as the achievement of common goals can be positively or negatively affected by the support of an institution (De Maggio et al., 2009).

2.3.3 Sustainability of a Virtual Community

Virtual communities need to ensure that members have the capability and incentive to participate and contribute to content. Member viewing and posting of content are the essential fundamentals of the survival of a virtual community (Koh et al., 2007). Unfortunately, online virtual communities can be more delicate than physical communities and can result in community members who are not committed to the community and are not adequately encouraged to interact (Denison, Hardy, Johanson, Stillman, & Schauder, 2002). Those who set up these communities need to make sure that communication, motivation and technology aspects of the community are adequately dealt with (Koh et al., 2007).

In order to maintain virtual communities, relationship management comes into play. Virtual communities can support and connect individuals who are from dispersed locations who actively use the network in order to communicate with each other. Communityware is an assortment of technologies that sustain virtual communities by providing a platform for information sharing, knowledge management, awareness of the other community members as well as the recommendation of interesting information and the matchmaking of interesting individuals to each other (Pimenta et al., 2012).

2.3.3.1 Usefulness

Virtual communities will only survive if members perceive that the benefit of joining such a community, with regard to valuable and useful content, outweighs the cost. Community members will engage more with the virtual community by means of viewing and posting content if they perceive the content as useful. The usefulness of a virtual community has been shown to be directly related to viewing activity because, as members discover that the content can aid them, they will actively seek out more content. Therefore, it is an essential success factor within a virtual community to have relevant content that is continuously updated in order to maintain the perceived usefulness to members (Koh et al., 2007).

2.3.3.2 Offline Interaction

Communication problems arise in a virtual community when there is an absence of social presence. Social presence, which is the degree to which the community makes the consciousness of other members and interpersonal contact detectable when exchanges occur, is essential for successful social and work environments because it represents the level of which a communication medium can enable the awareness of other members and increase interpersonal interaction during communication (Koh et al., 2007). Textual information is the main medium of communication in a virtual community and it intrinsically has a low social presence (Koh et al., 2007; Mathwick, Wiertz, & De Ruyter, 2008). Therefore, it is vital that the developers of virtual communities enable members to communicate via graphical and video interfaces to aid the social presence of their mainly text-based interactions (Koh et al., 2007).

Participation online can be complimented by face to face meetings and will add to the social presence of the community members; this means that members will be more aware of other members which, in turn, will encourage them to contribute more to the community. This offline contact aids members in identifying with each other, forms cohesion and bonds of trust between members, helps members understand each other, and fosters a sound foundation for their contributions in the online environment (De Maggio et al., 2009; Koh et al., 2007). Offline interaction has been shown to be related to posting activity because it fortifies camaraderie and understanding which entices the members to be more active in the virtual community by knowledge sharing through posted content than by just passive viewing of content (Koh et al., 2007).

When the ICT infrastructure is slow or unreliable, face to face interaction between community members has been able to substitute for online interaction whereas, when the ICT infrastructure is faster and more stable, community members tend to communicate more with on-line methods such as video and chat. Therefore, there is a correlation between the level of offline interaction and the quality of the ICT infrastructure (Koh et al., 2007). This reiterates the need for strong community leaders so that they can adequately use the ICT infrastructure to support the common goals of the community (De Maggio et al., 2009).

2.3.3.3 Challenges to ICT Use

ICT allows the members of a virtual community to cooperate with each other ubiquitously. Virtual communities rely on ICT which makes them more difficult to formulate and sustain than an offline community, but it does aid them in being more flexible to the needs of an increasingly ICT based environment (De Maggio et al., 2009). When the ICT infrastructure is inadequate for successful online interaction, activity within the virtual community is hindered. Adequate ICT infrastructure will include acceptable system response times, user-friendly graphical user interfaces (GUIs) and system reliability. Therefore the quality of the ICT infrastructure will constrain activity within the virtual community. The skill-base of the community members will also affect the ICT challenges (Koh et al., 2007). Another constraint to the ICT infrastructure lies in the attitude of the HEI to SNS, which is illustrated in Appendix B (University of Cape Town, 2009). UCT restricts bandwidth of SNS during working hours because they do not see SNS being used for work purposes (University of Cape Town, 2009).

2.3.3.4 Community Size

The size of the virtual community is imperative to the survival of the community because it influences the amount of posting and viewing activity taking place within the community (Koh et al., 2007). Virtual communities have the potential to grow to large numbers because so many people have access to, and are willing to interact on, the internet. The sizes of different virtual communities is extensively uneven (De Maggio et al., 2009). In the foundation stages of a virtual community, it is essential that as many members as possible are included so that the sustainability of the community can be encouraged (Koh et al., 2007). As the virtual community expands, the divergence between core (supernodes) and peripheral members within the community becomes patent (De Maggio et al., 2009; Granovetter, 1973). There are usually only a few supernode members; these are community leaders in terms of content generation and the structure of the virtual community (De Maggio et al., 2009; Granovetter, 1973; Koh et al., 2007). There are usually many peripheral members, the contributions of which link the virtual community to outside influences through weak ties (De Maggio et al., 2009; Granovetter, 1973). The large numbers and dispersion of members throughout the world increase the risk of community members to lose track of the common goals within the virtual community in aiding

their own personal interests i.e. where there is a lack of closure in these networks (Coleman, 1988; De Maggio et al., 2009). Alternatively, the large numbers and member dispersion add to the cultural diversity of members, adding varying viewpoints and opening up to novel ideas through their weak ties (De Maggio et al, 2009; Granovetter, 1973).

2.3.4 Virtual Community Stimulation Structure

If virtual communities are not effectively stimulated, they will not last (Koh et al., 2007). The main obstacle in creating a virtual community lies in the generation and sharing of knowledge through viewing and posting (Chiu, Hsu, & Wang, 2006; Koh et al., 2007). Koh et al (2007) suggest that further research needs to be placed on the fact that the posting activities of community members and the viewing activities of such members are stimulated by different factors and should, therefore, be treated as entirely separate actions. Viewing activity is related to the usefulness of content and the quality of the ICT infrastructure. Posting activity is related to offline interaction and the quality of the ICT infrastructure. For this reason, The Virtual Community Simulation Structure illustrates three stimulation drivers as they relate to virtual communities. These stimulation drivers are ICT infrastructure and quality, level of offline interaction, and usefulness. These stimulation drivers are dependent on community size and affect the posting and viewing activities of the virtual community. Community leaders who intend to create sustainable virtual communities need to take into account that, because posting and viewing activities within the virtual community have a variety of stimulants, the promotion of the stimulants encouraging posting activity may have negative consequences on viewing activity and vice versa. These possible negative effects are illustrated in Figure 1 with dashed lines. The correlation between quality of the ICT infrastructure and the level of offline interaction is represented by a bi-directional line because the one stimulant affects the other and vice versa (Koh, et al., 2007).

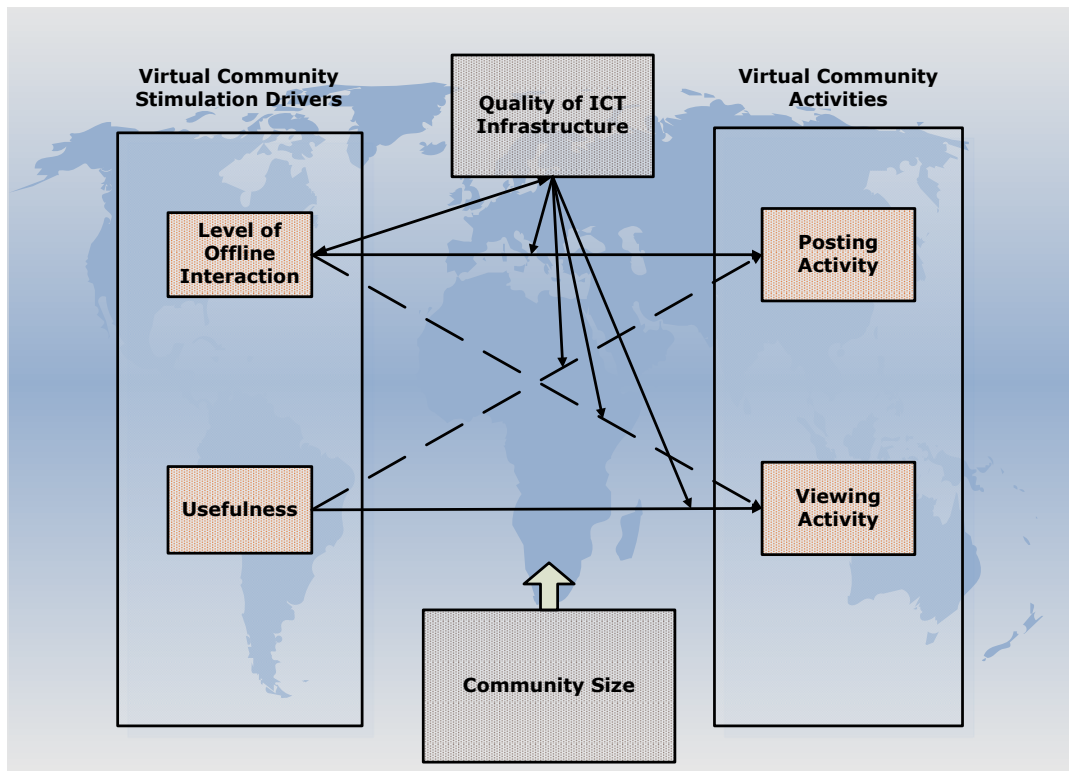


Figure 1: Virtual Community Stimulation Structure (modified from Koh et al, 2007. p 70)

The *Virtual Community Stimulation Structure* can be used to inform the establishment of an SNS presence; however, theories relevant to social interaction can inform what type of posting and viewing activity the SNS will be used for and can inform the formation of a theory about SNS interactions.

3 Salient Theoretical Constructs and Theories

This section introduces the key theoretical constructs and their source theories which have been used in the data analysis.

3.1 Actor Network Theory

Actor Network Theory (ANT) can be used as a framework for researching ICT implementation and innovation because it does not distinguish between the social and technical aspects of a network (Callon, 1998; Callon, 1991; Tatnall & Gilding, 1999). Therefore, it is advantageous to use ANT when analysing technological systems in order to overcome the distinction between the social and technical components that comprise them (Nijland, 2004). This is particularly relevant in SNS as it is difficult to differentiate between which parts of the posting activity are socially- or technologically based.

There are three tenets on which ANT is based, namely agnosticism, generalised symmetry and free association (Callon, 1986; Tatnall & Gilding, 1999). These tenets are set in place to try and treat all actors the same whether they possess social or technical aspects. Agnosticism implies that all actors within the network, whether they are technical or social, will be treated impartially. Generalised symmetry ensures that, if there are alternate perspectives between actors, impartial language will be used to explain these perspectives in a way that technical and social actors will not be biased through explanation (Tatnall & Gilding, 1999). Free association involves abandoning any fundamental differences between technical and social actors (Law, 1987; Tatnall & Gilding, 1999).

The strength and trustworthiness of a network relies on the strength of the connections that hold it together as well as the number of entities compiling the network. Actors within these networks can be comprised of other actors which all have a network of interactions and associations. Networks are always in a state of change as they can shrink, grow, collapse or re-form as a new network. In addition, ANT is particularly useful where social and political issues are involved (Callon, 1998; Tatnall & Gilding, 1999).

An actor network emerges through a process of convergence where new networks are being formed or a new network comes into being through the merging of existing networks (Atkinson, 2002). To further describe ANT, important concepts are set out in Table 1.

Table 1: ANT Concepts, based on Atkinson, 2002

ANT Concept	Definition and Summary
Actor	A component which bends space around itself, makes other components rely on it and creates an innovation, in its own language, to suit its own needs (Atkinson, 2002; Callon, 1991; Tatnall & Gilding, 1999)
Focal Actor	The focal actor attempts to enrol other actors into roles that the focal actor has defined for them (Callon, 1986). The focal actor defines the Obligatory Passage Point (OPP) through which all actors must pass in order to render the focal actor indispensable in the actor-network (Callon, 1986).
Actor-Network	A diverse network of actors who share the same interests (Atkinson, 2002). Actors describe a network by building relationships with each other (Callon, 1991).
Obligatory Passage Point (OPP)	A desired state that comes into being so that all actors can attain their interests as set out by the focal actor (Atkinson, 2002)
Translation	An actor is translated through a sequence of four moments leading up to a point where the actor passes through an irreversible OPP creating a black box (Atkinson, 2002; Callon, 1986).
1. Problematisation	The first moment of translation occurs when the focal actor outlines the characteristics and interests of other actors that align to its own interests, constituting itself as an OPP and therefore rendering itself indispensable in the network (Atkinson, 2002; Callon, 1986)
2. Interessement	The second moment of translation involves convincing actors to form an alliance and to accept what the focal actor set out for them in the Problematisation (Atkinson, 2002; Callon, 1986)
3. Enrolment	The third moment of translation where the focal actor defines the roles and interests of the other actors within the network, and these interests are accepted by the actors as their roles converge (Atkinson, 2002; Callon, 1986)
4. Mobilization	The fourth moment of translation involves the mobilization of actors who were not initially mobile. Actors, who were initially displaced, congregate at a particular place and time and participate either in their own capacity or through representatives (Callon, 1986)
Irreversibility	A state that is reached where it is not possible to go back to a stage where other possibilities exist (Atkinson, 2002)

Black Box	A black box can either be an actor or a network (as a group of inter-related actors) that can be opened to see the complexity within or closed so that a more basic view of the actor is offered. New or different actors inside a network can cause the black box of networked actors to be opened and inspected (Tatnall & Gilding, 1999).
Betrayal	A condition that occurs when actors go against the translations achieved by their representatives (Atkinson, 2002)

In order to create an actor-network, the interests of actors need to be aligned to each other in a process called translation (Nijland, 2004). Translation occurs when an actor, and their interests, are irrevocably aligned with an existing or potential network and the actors who comprise the network (Atkinson, 2002). Translation occurs in four steps as defined above, moving from problematisation to mobilization where the proposed solution finally gains widespread acceptance and becomes a black box (Nijland, 2004). Therefore, using ANT, it becomes possible to define the constituents of technical objects and theoretical knowledge through the process of translation whereby roles are defined by the focal actor, roles are assigned to other actors, and roles and scenarios can be explained and accepted (Callon, 1986). ANT can model the success or failure of an ICT innovation, especially where there are important technological, social and political issues involved (Tatnall & Gilding, 1999).

3.2 Networking Theory

Scale-free networks denote social networks of individuals (Granovetter, 1973; Strahilevitz, 2004). A scale-free network comprises of numerous poorly connected nodes, namely peripherals, and a smaller quantity of densely connected nodes, namely supernodes or hubs. Supernodes are known to vigorously disseminate vast amounts of data to other nodes within a network and to assist in the formation of connections between other nodes who would not have encountered each other had it not been for the introduction by the supernodes. Dissemination of information in scale-free social networks have the opportunity to move throughout the entire network and to other networks because of the activity of supernodes (Strahilevitz, 2004).

The amount of time individuals spend together, the level of emotional connection between individuals, how close individuals are with regard to confiding in one another, and the compromise within relationships form the strength of a tie between individuals that can be categorised as strong, weak or absent (Granovetter, 1973). The dissemination of information throughout social networks mainly relies on weak ties (Strahilevitz, 2004). Individuals who possess strong ties to each another lean towards being quite similar and therefore are not open to original ideas (Granovetter, 1973). Information quickly becomes outmoded as such individuals do not open themselves up to dissimilar perspectives (Granovetter, 1973; Strahilevitz, 2004). Strong ties demand more time, money and effort to uphold than weak ties (Granovetter, 1973). Weak ties offer a link between nodes in the network as well as aid in the dissemination of information to the supernodes who may have weak ties with a hundred to a few thousand individuals (Strahilevitz, 2004). Weak ties, therefore, are vital in attaining social cohesion as information is able to disseminate quickly right through the network, giving the group a sense of community. In addition, it is less complicated to disseminate mass communications to individuals who have a sense of community because information is rarely acted upon unless it is also verified by interpersonal bridging ties (Granovetter, 1973). Weak ties are therefore a superior way to gain novel information as well as resources from a larger community base (Denison & Johanson, 2007). SNS can consequently be used to encourage a sense of virtual community as well as to offer the continuance of weak ties, thus aiding individuals to increase their understanding of different individuals with whom they hardly ever interact with offline through a sequence of glimpses, events and status updates about daily life (Skeels & Grudin, 2009). On the other hand, strong links have been connected to trustworthiness in the form network closure (from the theory of social capital) because they create a secure environment in which members of a virtual community can use and rely on trusted information received from other community members (Coleman, 1988; Denison & Johanson, 2007). Network closure and its implications for a virtual community are discussed in the next section.

3.3 The Theory of Social Capital

Social capital is an intangible form of capital that pertains to the adhesive force between and among individuals or organisations (both referred to as actors) in groups or relationships. Social capital arises through relationship transformation between actors with regard to assisting productive activity. The significance of social capital lies in the recognition of social structure due to function, in the same way a director of a play is recognized in his or her role as the director, in spite of the dissimilar physical appearances of directors. The functional analysis of social structure creates worth in the form of a resource that individuals may capitalise on to attain their interests (Coleman, 1988).

Social capital can accumulate due to obligations that an actor is owed. These obligations can be tangible or intangible, as in the case of knowledge sharing. The increase in obligation that an actor owes to another, for favours received, results in the increase of social capital for the latter on which they can draw at any time, provided that there is a basis of trustworthiness (Coleman, 1988).

Norms form an influential but frail type of social capital. A norm comes into being to inhibit negative outcomes and to encourage positive ones. Such an effective norm, promoting the interests of a community where the community would reward favourable action, is a type of social capital that has the ability to construct new communities. This type of social capital enforces actions that are viewed as positive through the community view-point and constrains actions with negative community perceptions, but can have positive or negative consequences for the actors themselves; it also holds the possibility of constraining creativity (Coleman, 1988).

A property of social capital that affects how a norm behaves, so that it acts in a favourable manner, is known as closure. Where there is a lack of norms, there may also be a lack of closure. Figure 2 illustrates a network where there is a lack of closure and another network where closure is present. In the former network, *A* has a relationship with *B* and *C*, and may perform negative actions on *B* and *C*; because *B* and *C* do not have a relationship with each other but only with *D*

and *E*, *B* and *C* cannot combine forces to sanction the negative actions performed by *A*. Unless the damage done by *A* is bad enough to compel either *B* or *C* to challenge *A* on an individual basis, *A* can carry on with these negative actions unabated. Inside a network with closure, both *B* and *C* have ties to each other and could combine forces to confront *A* (Coleman, 1988; Shen, Monge, & Williams, 2012).

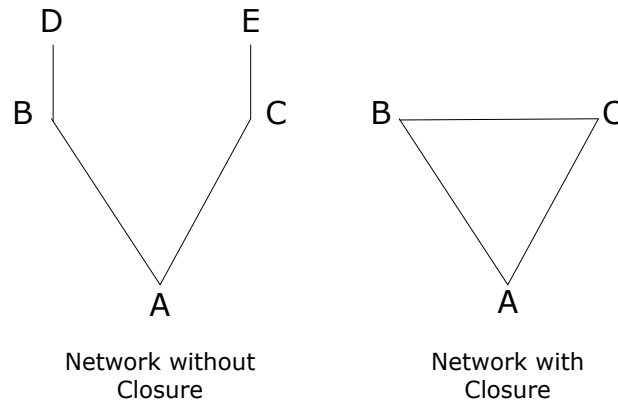


Figure 2: Closure (Coleman, 1988, p S106)

Intergenerational closure is illustrated in Figure 3. The vertical lines depict relationships across generations and the horizontal lines depict a relationship within the same generation. For the purposes of this literature review, parent is substituted for guardian in Coleman's (1988) theory of social capital, and child will be substituted with student, as the theory asserts that any adult can form intergenerational closure. *A* in both diagrams represents the guardian of student *B* and, similarly, *D* represents the guardian of student *C*. The horizontal line between *B* and *C* represents their relationship to each other at university. There will be a large amount of closure between *B* and *C* if they see each other often on campus or are in the same small class; therefore, behavioural norms and expectations will exist between them. The difference between the two communities is that the first does not have intergenerational closure whereas the second does. The importance of intergenerational closure is that behaviour can be observed and steered toward desired outcomes. The guardians *A* and *D* can collaborate about standards and reinforce each other in the way that *A* can serve as an observer of *B* and *C* and vice versa (Coleman, 1988).

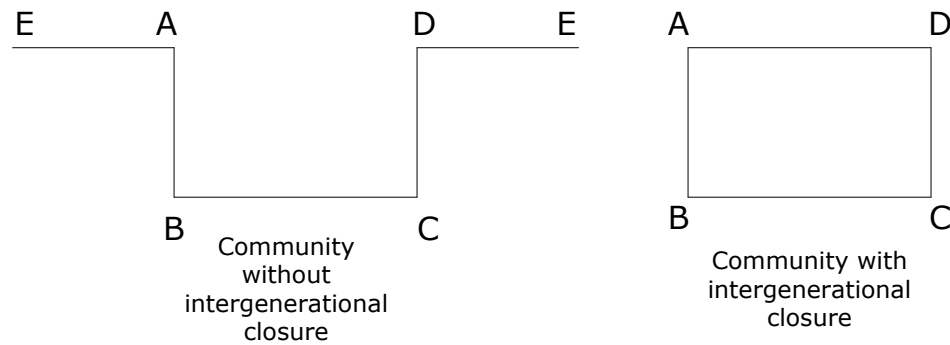


Figure 3: Intergenerational Closure (Coleman, 1988, p S107)

Closure, of both forms, is fundamental in the formulation of effective norms and for the formulation of trustworthiness, which is a different form of social capital that aids in generating obligations and expectations (Coleman, 1988; Shen et al., 2012). Within a closed network, failure to perform on an obligation (which is considered as a negative action imposed on another actor) may merely be sanctioned by the actor to whom the obligation was owed and would not affect the reputation of the obligated actor. However, within a closed structure, such a failure will result in a poor reputation for the obligated actor and, therefore, a network with closure promotes trustworthiness that obligations will be respected. To take intergenerational closure a step further, Coleman (1988) suggests that social capital within a family will give a child access to the social capital of a parent. In this research, the family is substituted by staff within a higher education institution and the child is still referred to as a student as Coleman's (1988) theory states that social capital can be transferred between a child and their parents or other members who form relationships with the child. This transferable type of intergenerational social capital depends on the physical presence of adults in a family environment (university staff) and the amount of attention given to the student (Coleman, 1988; Shen et al., 2012).

Social capital for the student within a family can extend from the family into the community as well, which will affect graduate attributes and education for the community (Coleman, 1988; Gunga & Ricketts, 2008). International students lose social capital when they travel from their families to a new country as they lose ties with their friends and family (Coleman, 1988). It will, therefore, be interesting to see how an educational institution, aided by a virtual community, could act as a new host in the new country because virtual communities have the ability to

produce a new form of social capital that can enhance social capital created in geographically close communities or face-to-face communities (Mathwick et al., 2008).

The main consequence of social capital within virtual communities results in the establishment of a social support system. This social support system can function from individual to individual or from individual to institution (Mathwick et al., 2008). Virtual communities can be utilised in progressing operational competence and skill, build offline communities, distribute support and services, and construct social capital (Denison & Johanson, 2007). Organisations use virtual communities for their capability of forming social capital to compete globally through the formation of communities that have crossed physical organisational confines. Such virtual communities form a strategic asset as they become a stage for coalescing access with skill which results in knowledge sharing, production and application (De Maggio et al., 2009). Social capital, however, has not been researched extensively in relation to virtual communities and SNS; therefore, a gap exists in this area for further research (Yang, Lee, & Kurnia, 2009). Social identity forms an additional dynamic feature of virtual communities in augmenting online communication as well as increasing social capital (Denison et al., 2002).

3.4 The Theories of Social Identity and Social Presence

Physical communities, as well as virtual communities, are areas where analogous social needs can be satisfied and, therefore, the possibility of engagement in the community is augmented. Virtual communities hold the capability to transform community identity as they move interaction from a physical to a virtual dimension (Denison et al., 2002). Social Identity Theory is defined as “a social psychological analysis of the role of self-conception in group membership, group processes, and intergroup relations” (Hogg, 2006, p. 111). A group comes into being, psychologically, if more than two actors comprehend and consider themselves as having similar attributes that distinguish them from other individuals. Social Identity Theory, as a result, encompasses occurrences such as consistency between group members, conformist behaviour, organisational behaviours, and group bonding (Hogg, 2006). An increase in group bonding through social identity should also increase the social capital of members as they link their physical relations to their virtual relations (Koh et al., 2007).

Offline interaction allows members to connect with other members and to link their offline persona with their online one. This is especially important when profile pictures do not adequately depict what another member looks like and members are, therefore, not visually recognisable from the online community. Face-to-face interaction aids members in identifying with who they are in the community. When the members identify with their online persona, this triggers their desire to actively post content. Therefore, community leaders need to organise face-to-face meetings and events, with the aim of increasing social identity, so that members will be encouraged to share knowledge offline coupled with posting content online. However, in an international environment, it might not always be possible for members to meet face-to-face and, therefore, chat and videoconferencing capabilities need to be employed to foster the sense of community with geographically dispersed members (Koh et al., 2007). An advantage of virtual communities is that they let members put across their opinions and unique identity as well as to identify with the virtual community as a member. Thus they add novel ideas through expression in a secure, closed setting based on trustworthiness (Coleman, 1988; Denison et al., 2002)

Social presence in a SNS is the degree to which the community makes the consciousness of other members and interpersonal contact detectable when exchanges occur. Social presence is essential in facilitating effective information exchanges in social arenas such as on a SNS (Butler, 2001; Koh et al., 2007). Social presence has been known to build a sense of community and social interaction amongst global learners (Hall & Justus, 2013).

3.5 Other Relevant Theories But Not Used

3.5.1 Activity Theory (AT)

An activity, in Activity Theory (AT), is the result of the contact between participating subjects, the tools that they used in an activity, and the operations that affected the outcome of the activity (Rambe, 2012). An activity is defined by the conflicting relationship between an individual and a decided object of focus that is altered by tools, the community setting and culture. The tools that are accessible to an activity control how the activity is undertaken and lessons learned from previous activities advise how the tools can be improved. AT is a holistic framework that is

appropriate for analysing ICT and how it is employed in emerging phenomena. AT is useful in investigating human emotions that occur when using certain ICT tools and the attitudes that are formed about such tools for their future use (Hasan & Pfaff, 2012).

AT has been used to investigate academic engagement in academic courses, the academic use of video games in online learning, mobile learning, computer supported collaborative learning (CSCL) as well as the tacit and explicit knowledge in teaching communities (Rambe, 2012; Hasan & Pfaff, 2012). The use of AT to investigate SNS deployment in HE is not common but could provide a useful lens to see how students can learn academic subjects from their peers in a virtual community environment. However, this research is focussed on how to aid international and local student interaction in a virtual community in order to augment their social campus experience and cross-cultural interaction but not necessarily on how a SNS virtual community can be used as a learning tool in an academic environment (Rambe, 2012). Therefore, although AT could be used and adapted for this type of research, AT was not used as a framework because it was not seen to add significantly more value than the theories already employed. In addition, ANT was thought of as a more useful lens for this research as ANT treats social and technical actors equally. Agnosticism was found to be more meaningful especially as it was difficult to see what Facebook Page posts were generated especially by the Facebook application or one of the Facebook page administrators.

3.5.2 Community of Practice (CoP)

A Community of Practice (CoP) is a framework that highlights social participation in social settings (Barczyk & Duncan, 2013). A CoP can consist of a group of individuals in a community who share their expertise on a shared subject area. The individuals can learn through the development and use of shared resources (Lewis, Koston, Quartley, & Adsit, 2011; Lewis & Rush, 2013). Participation in the CoP can engender a feeling of belonging to the community where individuals feel emotionally connected to each other and that their need for knowledge about the subject matter is being satisfied. Many studies have found that CoPs have the ability to augment effective learning in a campus environment (Barczyk & Duncan, 2013). SNS can be used in HE to augment teaching with technology (Lewis & Rush, 2013). However, in this

research, the SNS virtual community was set up with the aim of socialising international students into the local campus community and not necessarily of creating a CoP where experts share information on courses or one specific knowledge area. Therefore, CoP was not used as a framework in this research.

4 Research Questions

Stemming from the theories described above, the research question is: How could the use of a SNS facilitate internationalisation in a HEI? As stated in the literature review, the interaction of local and international students is a desired outcome in facilitating internationalisation in HE. This question will be investigated through a set of sub-questions which are listed in Table 2. The first sub-question will investigate the age and genders of the virtual community users. Each subsequent sub-question will be analysed using specific theories.

Table 2: Sub Questions Used to Investigate How a SNS can Facilitate Internationalisation in a HEI

Sub Question	Source/Theory
Will the age and gender of the SNS virtual community page likers and posters reflect the age and gender characteristics present within the HEI?	SNS and HEI demographic comparison
How will actors interact on a SNS virtual community that has been set up by an administrative department in a HEI?	Actor Network Theory
Which actors will become supernodes on the SNS virtual community that has been set up by an administrative department in a HEI?	Networking Theory
How will the formation of weak ties bring new information into a SNS virtual community that was set up by an administrative department in a HEI?	Networking Theory
Can closure be created in a SNS virtual community that has been set up by an administrative department in a HEI?	The Theory of Social Capital
Will actors on a SNS virtual community that has been set up by an administrative department in a HEI identify themselves as belonging to the virtual community?	Social Identity
Will actors on a SNS virtual community that has been set up by an administrative department in a HEI notice and react to other actors interacting on the virtual community?	Social Presence

5 IAPO Case Study

5.1 History and Social Background

5.1.1 University of Cape Town

UCT was established in 1829 as the South African College, a secondary school for boys (International Academic Programmes Office, 2006; University of Cape Town, 2013). A small tertiary education section of the college started to grow rapidly from 1880 as a result of the demand for mining skills after the discovery of gold and diamonds further North of South Africa (University of Cape Town, 2013). The college became a mature university between 1880 and 1900 due to private as well as government funding; however, it was only formally recognised as a university in 1918 due to substantial investments and a state grant. In 1928, the bulk of the university moved to its current location at Groote Schuur on the slopes of Devil's Peak in Cape Town as a bequest from Cecil John Rhodes (University of Cape Town, 2013).

From 1920, UCT began admitting small numbers of black students. Between 1960 and 1990 UCT was referred to as “Moscow on the Hill” due to its marked opposition to the Apartheid policy of the South African government during that period. The intake of black students increased from 1980 due to the indications of change in South Africa and, in the present day, UCT is one of the most diverse universities in South Africa (International Academic Programmes Office, 2006; University of Cape Town, 2013).

5.1.2 The Formation of the International Academic Programmes Office (IAPO)

UCT has nurtured and developed many linkages with international institutions over the years despite the negative impact that the Apartheid policy had on isolating South Africa from the rest of the world (International Academic Programmes Office, 2006). In the 1990's, UCT instigated increased integration with the African continent through the Association of African Universities (AAU). At a 1993 meeting of the AAU in Ghana, the AAU formally agreed that ties should be made with South Africa. The result of these new linkages was the formation of the University

Science Humanities and Engineering Partnerships in Africa (USHEPiA) programme allowing African scholars to study at UCT (International Academic Programmes Office, 2006).

In addition to the newly formed African linkages, students from other continents (particularly North America) became interested in coming to UCT on study abroad programmes. The increase in funds from the new influx of international students enabled UCT to found the International Academic Programmes Office in 1996 (Mthenthe, 2011). IAPO was tasked to manage the increasing number of applications of international students as well as the academic institutions intending on forming collaborations with UCT, what they termed “bring the world to UCT” (Mthenthe, 2011).

Since its inception, IAPO’s portfolio has diversified and grown. IAPO’s latest mandate has been set out in the UCT Policy on Internationalisation and the strategic goals of UCT (International Academic Programmes Office, 2013).

5.1.3 UCT Policy on Internationalisation

UCT sees internationalisation as overwhelmingly affecting the way in which countries and institutions operate and, therefore, firmly regards internationalisation as a fundamental part of quality HE and research (University of Cape Town, 2006). In 2006, the UCT Policy on Internationalisation was ratified and the function of IAPO was clearly stated:

“It is the function of IAPO to lead and co-ordinate the development of internationalisation at UCT, and to promote the integration of diverse communities across the University.” (University of Cape Town, 2006, p. 2)

Key principles of internationalisation were also identified in the policy. These were:

1. Excellence and Mutual Benefit:
 - a. UCT would strive for excellence when internationalising the campus
 - b. Only the best students would be chosen for programmes
 - c. All collaboration agreements would be mutually beneficial to all parties concerned

2. Equity and Institutional Culture:
 - a. Internationalisation would be a vehicle for equity and transformation at UCT
 - b. People from underrepresented groups would be considered first for international exchange opportunities
 - c. Internationalisation would diversify the campus
 - d. The integration of international staff and students into UCT life would be seen as important
3. Position in Africa:
 - a. Internationalisation will focus on the African Continent
 - b. Linkages will be increased with the South African Development Community (SADC) region
 - c. SADC students will be enrolled on the same terms as local UCT students
4. Research and Academic Autonomy:
 - a. Academics were noted as having the right to form their own formal and informal collaborations and links
5. Curriculum:
 - a. UCT courses would be of an international standard as well as responsive to regional and international circumstances
6. International Student Numbers:
 - a. There would be a cap on the numbers of international students allowed to study at UCT (University of Cape Town, 2006)

In addition to the policy on internationalisation ratified by UCT in 2006, in 2009, Internationalisation made its way into the strategic goals of the university (University of Cape Town, 2006; University of Cape Town, 2009).

5.2 UCT Strategy

UCT produced its most recent strategic plan in 2009 for the years 2010 to 2014. This strategic plan prioritizes *Internationalisation via an Afropolitan Niche* as the first strategic goal (University of Cape Town, 2009). *Internationalisation via an Afropolitan Niche* stresses that

UCT students should get an international education as well as have gain entry into a continental and worldwide network of academics (University of Cape Town, 2009). Furthermore, UCT aimed to be the hub for African resources and knowledge (University of Cape Town, 2009). There were six sections to goal one, each stressing a different angle on internationalisation in the UCT context. These six sections relate to how:

1. UCT will become an Afropolitan University by:
 - a. encouraging the study of issues affecting Africa and publishing information unique to Africa
 - b. becoming a hub for knowledge about Africa as well as being the preferred destination in Africa for international collaboration
 - c. encouraging South-South academic collaborations as well as collaborations with academics from the rest of African
 - d. increasing the number of African staff at UCT
2. UCT will strengthen its international research profile by:
 - a. prioritising international research collaborations
 - b. facilitating existing and new research links formed at different levels within the university
 - c. pursuing a select number of fundamental institution-wide partnerships
3. UCT graduates will obtain international graduate attributes by:
 - a. ensuring that UCT graduates possess the ability for critical comparative thinking and cross-cultural communication expertise
 - b. encouraging UCT staff to develop competencies to teach a diverse student body
 - c. increasing the number of languages taught at UCT
 - d. providing study exchange opportunities for UCT post-graduate students
4. UCT will internationalise the campus through Internationalisation at Home (IaH) by
 - a. preparing UCT graduates to work in a global environment by allowing them to interact with international scholars on the UCT campus

- b. increasing the number of Semester Study Abroad (SSA) students so that funding may be ring-fenced to send more UCT students abroad, and to make sure that the SSA exchange agreements are reciprocal by allowing UCT students to visit the SSA partner's university
- 5. UCT will promote transformation through internationalisation by:
 - a. leveraging existing international partnerships to allow junior researchers and post-graduate students to study abroad
 - b. increasing the international exposure of UCT academics by allowing them to attend and present at international conferences
 - c. allowing non-SADC African students to access post-graduate education at UCT through a preferential fee rate
- 6. UCT will engage with government policy by:
 - a. lobbying government departments to relax legislation relating to international credit transfer, degree recognition and immigration (University of Cape Town, 2009).

5.3 IAPO's Response to UCT Mandate

IAPO responds to both the strategic direction of UCT and the UCT Policy on Internationalisation by becoming a home base for all international students as well as enabling and endorsing internationalisation throughout UCT (International Academic Programmes Office, 2013).

Internationalisation can be coordinated within an office, such as IAPO, but the office cannot function in isolation as internationalisation needs to emanate throughout the entire organisation (Teichler, 2004; University of Cape Town, 2009). To cater for the needs of international collaborators and students, IAPO provides many services, ranging from general enquiries to specialised administrative advice (Mthenthe, 2011). Through connections with other UCT faculties and departments, as well as external service providers, IAPO responds to the administrative, academic and social integration of international stakeholders at UCT (International Academic Programmes Office, 2013).

5.4 IAPO Organisational Structure

As of 1 August 2013, IAPO employed 28 staff members, 27 permanent and one on a contract; this excludes ad hoc staff and student assistants used for peak periods (International Academic Programmes Office, 2013). These staff members work within six different sections namely:

1. African Partnerships and Programmes (APP)
2. International Full Degree (IFD) Students
3. Finance
4. Mobility, Partnerships and Programmes (MPP)
5. Systems, Information and Communication (SIC)
6. Directorate (International Academic Programmes Office, 2013)

For more information on the staff and structure of IAPO, please see Addendum C.

5.5 IAPO's Main Stakeholder

The main stakeholder of IAPO is the international student body (Mthenthe, 2011). UCT is the leading university in Africa and demands for a place at UCT have grown tremendously over the years (Mthenthe, 2011). UCT enrolments continue to rise and international students made up 19% of the student body of 26 277 UCT students in 2012 (International Academic Programmes Office, 2013). There are two main categories of international students at UCT, namely International Full Degree (IFD) students and Semester Study Abroad (SSA) students. A numerical depiction of the UCT student body over the previous ten years is represented in

Table 3.

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
UCT students enrolled	19943	20480	21356	21454	21419	22608	24012	25013	25352	26277
UCT students (excl. SSA)	19412	19901	20666	20781	20706	22099	23168	24002	24530	25314
International students (excl. SSA)	3013	3329	3727	4764	4458	4750	3464	3600	3771	3929
International students % (excl. SSA)	16%	17%	18%	17%	23%	21%	14%	14%	15%	16%
Number of countries	92	97	96	98	107	106	97	101	111	112
Number of African countries	30	29	31	38	36	30	31	35	42	37
SADC students	2195	2360	2546	2476	2299	2406	1987	2001	2053	2439
SADC student %	11%	12%	12%	12%	11%	11%	8%	8%	8%	9%
Non-SADC International students (excl. SSA)	818	976	1181	2288	2158	2344	1478	1604	1364	1470
Non-SADC International students from Africa	286	399	442	557	561	629	567	620	648	707
Study Abroad Students	531	579	690	673	699	908	874	1026	844	954
International Students incl. SSA	3544	3908	4374	5437	5171	5259	4307	4 611	4593	4892
International student %	18%	19%	20%	25%	24%	23%	18%	18%	18%	19%
International undergraduate	1748	N/A	2033	2408	2215	2365	1760	2918	2727	2888
International postgraduate	1265	N/A	1467	1651	1519	1565	1631	1693	1866	2004

Table 3: International student Statistics (International Academic Programmes Office, 2013) - 2012 data is Provisional

5.5.1 International Full Degree (IFD) Students

IFD students are international students (students who are not South African citizens or permanent residents) who enrol at UCT in order to complete an entire qualification and, therefore, stay at UCT for two years or more (Mthenthe, 2011). IFD students can be further broken down into students from the SADC region (whose member states adopted a treaty in 1997 establishing cooperation with regard to education and training), students from the rest of Africa, and students from the rest of the world (Mthenthe, 2011).

The numbers of IFD students increased steadily from 2 254 students in 2001 to 4764 students in 2006 (Mthenthe, 2011). After 2006, application acceptance caps were instated to ensure that there were enough places at UCT for local students and to make sure that the service delivery to the IFD students remained sustainable. In 2012, UCT welcomed 3 929 IFD students (International Academic Programmes Office, 2013; Mthenthe, 2011).

The IFD programme at UCT was reviewed in 2011 to ascertain what the academic, social, financial and strategic value the IFD programme brought to UCT (Mthenthe, 2011). The review found that the IFD programme attracted a diverse range of students, mainly from the SADC region and the rest of Africa, who wanted to come to UCT because of its good academic reputation (Mthenthe, 2011). Not only the IFD students benefited from their studies at UCT as the learning experience of the local students was also enriched by the diversity found on the campus (Mthenthe, 2011). IFD students initially struggled to settle into UCT campus life as well as to adjust to the South African social dynamics when they first arrived (Mthenthe, 2011). Most IFD students, however, made friends with local students during their studies at UCT which strengthened their own cultural values (Mthenthe, 2011). In addition, these friendships introduced the local students to the views and values of different cultures (Mthenthe, 2011). The IFD students added new perspectives to classroom discussions and helped to change xenophobic attitudes on the UCT campus even though one in five IFD students experienced some degree of xenophobia from other students and teaching staff (Mthenthe, 2011). Furthermore, some local students noticed that IFD students liked to socialise mainly with each other which may indicate that more interaction between local and international students was necessary (Mthenthe, 2011).

IFD students found that their studies at UCT opened the door to many opportunities for personal and career development (Mthenthe, 2011). IFD students are mainly from Africa and thus aid the Universities goal of *Internationalisation with an Afropolitan Niche* as these students become graduates and extend UCT's networks and influence across the rest of the African continent (Mthenthe, 2011).

5.5.2 Semester Study Abroad (SSA) Students

UCT's SSA programme officially originated in its current form in 1998, although the university accepted international exchange students even before the inception of IAPO in 1996 (Mthenthe, 2010; International Academic Programmes Office, 2006). SSA students come to UCT from many different countries such as Norway, the Netherlands, Germany, France and Canada. However, the largest group of SSA students is from America which causes the UCT community to stereotype all SSA students as American students (Mthenthe, 2010). Unlike the IFD students who come to UCT for its academic reputation and for building their careers, the majority of SSA students come to UCT for an international experience and adventure (Mthenthe, 2010; Mthenthe, 2011).

The SSA programme has grown rapidly and is the largest SSA programme in Africa (Mthenthe, 2010). IAPO reviewed its SSA programme with regard to the value that the programme brings to UCT, in light of *Internationalisation with an Afropolitan Niche*, and the ways in which the programme can improve (Mthenthe, 2010). The SSA programme is specifically important to UCT as it internationalises the campus through the international perspectives of these students (Mthenthe, 2010). This internationalisation of the home campus is referred to as IaH.

Recommendations from the SSA review indicated three main problem areas:

1. Diversification of international students with regard to country of origin
2. Uneven expansion of the SSA programme
3. Communication between stakeholders (Mthenthe, 2010)

The lack of diversity of the SSA students caused the local students not to befriend them as the local students saw the SSA students as a large, impenetrable, mainly American group

(International Academic Programmes Office, 2010; Mthenthe, 2010). Many of the SSA students were disappointed that they did not get a chance to meet new friends in South Africa as they had limited access to the local students (SSA students are in private housing) as well as to their orientation leaders, who were tasked with integrating them into the UCT environment (Mthenthe, 2010).

Uneven expansion of the SSA programme caused issues with profit sharing between faculties, departments and courses (International Academic Programmes Office, 2010). There is also a need to reduce the number of students in Humanities courses and to more evenly distribute SAA students among other faculties (International Academic Programmes Office, 2010). This raised the concern that the financial rewards of the programme were overtaking the educational value of the programme (International Academic Programmes Office, 2010). This uneven expansion also presents a divide between two types of education, namely education as a commodity (where intellectual performance is the main driver) and education for building a community (where it is more important to be socially productive within the community) (Gunga & Ricketts, 2008; Rozema, 2001). These two ways of viewing education emphasize the effect of globalisation (education as a commodity) over internationalisation (education as building society) (Gunga & Ricketts, 2008). Education for society refers lifelong learning and promoting international graduate attributes of the student, and form part of UCT's other strategic goals that re-enforce UCT's goal of internationalisation (University of Cape Town, 2009).

In addition, the SSA review highlighted that IAPO needs to improve internal communication between itself and UCT, improve external communication with third party providers, communicate effectively to the SSA students about pre-registration requirements and facilitate communication and activities between local and SSA students (Mthenthe, 2010).

5.6 Integration into UCT Campus Life

Students in SSA programmes only have a short time (usually less than six months) to learn about the culture of the host country, whereas IFD students have a longer time (Harris, 2008). All international students, however, will have to deal with at least one new culture as well as a

different education system and social life, with all the related expectations, as they adjust to their new environment, notwithstanding the usual pressures of performance and other issues that a local student faces. If international students are not made aware of the fundamental differences prior to arrival at the HEI, this could lead to even more adjustment difficulties and problems as these students assume that the educational system and society at large will operate in the same way as in their home country. International students can, therefore, experience culture shock (Zhou, Jindal-Snape, Topping, & Todman, 2008).

An orientation programme, lasting for the first week of the semester, is put in place for IFD and SSA students (International Academic Programmes Office, 2010). Orientation includes social events and parties, and is meant as the bridge toward student interaction (International Academic Programmes Office, 2010). But this is not necessarily sustained throughout the stay of the international students, leaving them feeling culturally distanced from the local students (International Academic Programmes Office, 2010).

5.7 IAPO's Response to Student Integration

IAPO responded to the challenges of integrating international students into the UCT campus community by creating a Facebook page named IAPO @ UCT that made its first post on 18 January 2011.

6 Methodology

6.1 Philosophy and Approach

The Interpretivist research philosophy was used in conducting this research as the researcher was involved with the participants in the SNS to understand the actors' interaction with and use of the SNS (Gephart, 1999). An Interpretivist approach supposes that reality is explained socially through language, shared meanings, consciousness and artefacts, and can be understood through meanings that people allocate to phenomena (Klein & Myers, 1999).

The researcher set up a Facebook page and used content analysis to analyse the posts on the page whereby the context and content of raw data, collected from participants and data relating to the participants themselves, were summarised according to themes within established theory, noting the treatment and number of occurrence of each theme (Bosch, 2009; Spencer, Ritchie, & O'Connor, 2003). The content analysis was used to identify recurrent types of interaction that could be explained through the employment of the different themes with the main aim of describing the online interaction over time. The raw data were the Facebook Page posts, Likes, Comments and Shares on the IAPO @ UCT page that was set up by the researcher (Alkazemi, Bowe, & Blom, 2012). The research purpose was exploratory as the researcher attempted to see how a SNS can facilitate international integration to a local campus in higher education through the use of five theories as lenses into this phenomena (Lincoln & Guba, 2000).

6.2 Strategy

A case study approach was chosen as appropriate for this research because it involved the implementation of an innovative system within an organisation (Baskerville & Wood-Harper, 1998). The researcher was immersed in the case study while observing participant interaction within the SNS. *Type TE Generalizability*, which involves generalising phenomena from known theories and describing the phenomena in a new context or setting, informed the decision to use a case study to describe the phenomena on the SNS within the setting of an administrative departments within a HEI (Lee & Baskerville, 2003).

One case study was used to investigate how a SNS can aid international integration to a local campus in higher education. However, one case study will not limit the generalizability of results as illustrated in

Figure 4. Case study findings form a different data type to sampling (Yin, 1994). This means that generalizability of case study data is not the same as statistical generalizability and, therefore, cannot be governed by statistical generalizability methods (Yin, 1994). Therefore, increasing the number of case studies will not increase the generalizability of a theory that is based on the results of one case study (Lee & Baskerville, 2003).

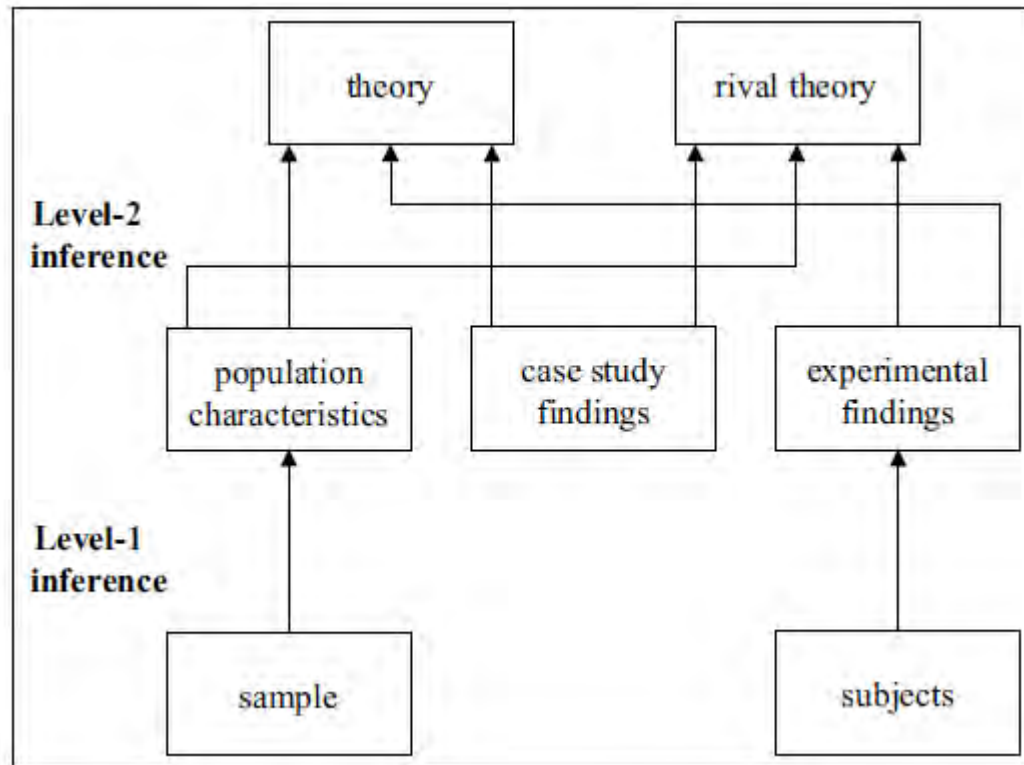


Figure 4: Generalization (Yin, 1994, p. 31)

Within the case study itself, multiple sources of evidence were sourced, thereby triangulating the results (Lee & Baskerville, 2003; Yin, 1994). However, pertaining to the generalizability of the theory to other situations (other than the one observed by the researcher), such generalizability is not possible (even if multiple case studies were used), which means that any theory based on any

number of case studies needs to be tested in each new situation and cannot be generalizable (Lee & Baskerville, 2003).

6.3 Time Frame

A ‘snap shot’ of Facebook use is not as advantageous as Facebook use changes over time (Joinson, 2008). It was the researcher’s intention to see what the interactions between the actors would be as the Facebook Page matures over time; therefore, a longitudinal time frame was used for this case study. The data was collected over a two and a half year period i.e. from 1 January 2011 to 30 June 2013, with the first post on 18 January 2011.

6.4 SNS Questionnaire

The case study was based at the International Academic Programmes Office (IAPO) of the University of Cape Town in South Africa as this university has the largest Semester Study Abroad (SSA) programme in Africa (Mthenthe, 2010). South Africa, as a developing country, is highlighted as a sought-after destination to aid the high demand for international education world-wide (Altbach & Knight, 2006). The SNS, Facebook, was employed using a Facebook Page to facilitate the virtual community for the university because the university already used this SNS for interaction with students (University of Cape Town, 2010). In previous research, Facebook was found to be the most popular SNS at UCT, with UCT students preferring its use even to the official UCT learning management system, Vula (Barczyk & Duncan, 2013; Bosch, 2009). One of the strengths of Facebook is that research had already verified its ability to facilitate a community where students could get to know each other in an informal and sympathetic environment (Barczyk & Duncan, 2013). However, sampling questionnaires were still used to ascertain the viability of the SNS Facebook for the international students studying at UCT in case this has changed since the 2013 study by Barczyk & Duncan and the students had moved on to a more popular SNS (Saw et al., 2013).

Each international student physically present at pre-registration in the first semester of 2011 was given a questionnaire that they were encouraged to complete in the queue. The questionnaire collected qualitative and quantitative data (attached in Addendum B) which asked them whether

they have a presence on a SNS and what they use the SNS for. Additionally, the questionnaire made the student aware of the IAPO Page on Facebook. The student was encouraged to join the IAPO @ UCT page.

The questionnaire was completed by 226 UCT international students out of a total 1980 international students (who pre-registered before 30 June 2011 in the 2011 academic year) therefore the response rate was 11.4%. SNS were used by 91% of the respondents with Facebook being the most popular SNS with 86% usage among the total respondents. There were 17 SNS that respondents stated they used. The top three SNS, excluding Facebook, were Twitter (20%), MySpace (4.4%) and Hi5 (1.3%). The respondents, who stated that they used SNS, said they used it to communicate with friends and family (chatting and keeping in touch), networking, looking at photos and for entertainment. Some mentioned that it was a cheap means of communicating with distant friends and family.

Respondents claimed that they used Facebook for the same reasons that they used the other SNS but, in addition, they mentioned the need to update their Facebook statuses, looking at other Facebook user profiles and to meeting new people. Respondents who used Facebook indicated how often they logged into the SNS. Although 5% of the respondents who used Facebook did not want to answer this question, the majority of the users logged in daily (63%). The results are shown in Figure 5.

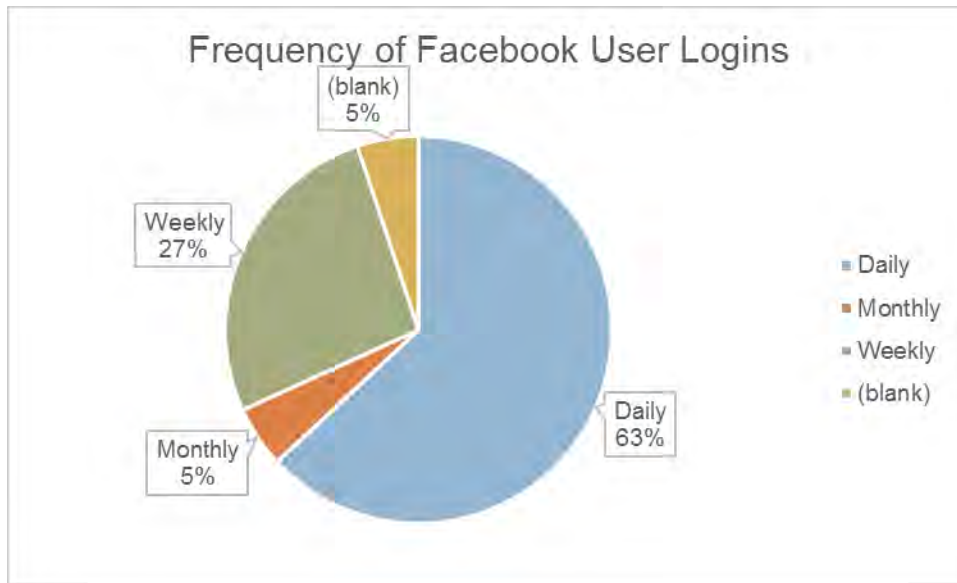


Figure 5: Frequency of Facebook Respondent Logins

The respondents were requested to indicate the number of friends that they had on Facebook. The lowest number of friends was 6 with the highest number being 2780. Twelve respondents (6%) who used Facebook did not want to answer this question. The amount of Facebook friends was listed in groups of 100 for analysis. This distribution of Facebook friends is shown in Figure 6. Most respondents had between 301 and 400 friends with the second most popular amount of friends lying between 101 and 200. The third most popular amount of friends was between 401 and 500.

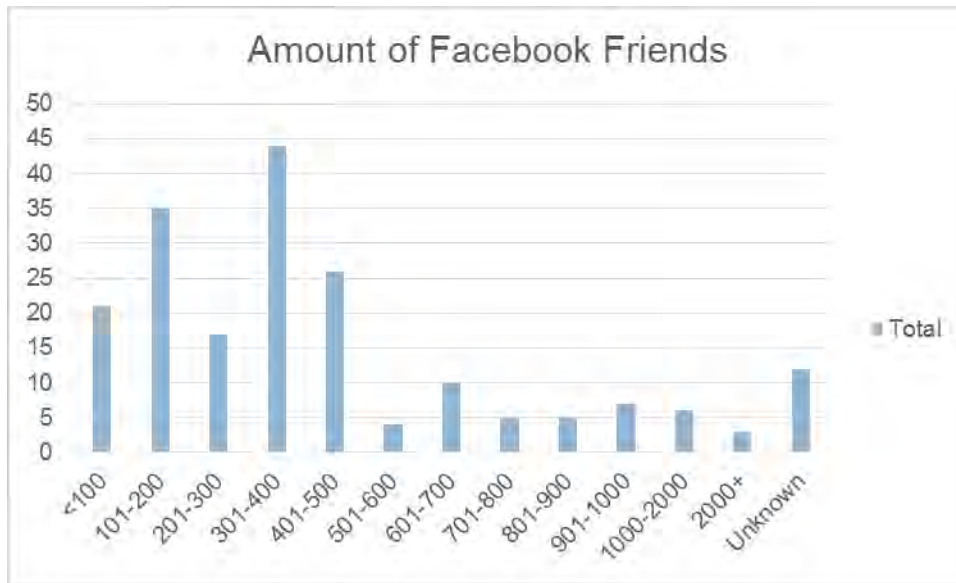


Figure 6: Respondent Facebook Friends

Although 36 % of the respondents stated that they were aware of the IAPO @ UCT Page only 1.8% of the respondents admitted to being followers of IAPO @ UCT. The small percentage of followers who admitted using IAPO @ UCT stated that they mainly sought pre-registration information from the page.

Of the 9% of total responders who did not use SNS, the main reasons for choosing not to participate on SNS were that:

- There was no need
- SNS were not professional
- SNS was a waste of time
- Respondents enjoyed their privacy and SNS would be an invasion of their privacy
- Respondents preferred email or talking to people on Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP) platforms.

Only 29% of the non SNS users stated that they would consider using Facebook in the future and just under 10% of the non SNS users stated that they would join IAPO @ UCT if they were to join Facebook.

The results of this questionnaire informed the researcher that Facebook was a good SNS platform to engage with the international students because it was still a popular SNS at UCT (Barczyk & Duncan, 2013; Bosch, 2009). The questionnaire indicated that students were already seeking administrative information about pre-registration on the IAPO @ UCT Page. The fact that under 2% of the respondents had joined IAPO @ UCT at that stage was not too concerning because IAPO at UCT only started posting on the page from 18 January 2011. The main pre-registration period in the first semester of 2011 ran from 31 January 2011 to 11 February 2011 and most of the questionnaires were completed in that time period. This would not have given the respondents much time to become aware of the page or decide if they were interested in joining the page. Only 36% of the respondents stated that they knew about the page before completing the questionnaire but all respondents completing the questionnaire would have been made aware of the existence of the page. Therefore the questionnaire was instrumental in making the presence of IAPO @ UCT on Facebook more widely known.

6.5 Data Collection

Mixed methods of data were used as the researcher had access to both qualitative and quantitative data which allowed the researcher to triangulate the results (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2003). The unit of analysis was the high-level organisational perspective, filtering down to the individual actor-level - as described by ANT as opening the “black boxes” to interrogate which actors lie within.

6.5.1 IAPO @ UCT Facebook Page

The IAPO @ UCT Page is open to the public and any international and local students as well as all local staff were encouraged to use the Facebook Page. The researcher collected all posts and Comments on the page but focused on how these interactions affected international student integration into the UCT campus. Other effects of the Facebook posts and Comments are, therefore, out of the scope of this research. The total student population consequently was all international students who came to study at UCT between the beginning of the first semester of 2011 and the end of the first semester of 2013, which was 4 593 students in 2011 (International

Academic Programmes Office, 2013), 4892 students in 2012 (International Academic Programmes Office, 2013) and an 3056 students registered before 1 July 2013 (according to the UCT PeopleSoft student administration system).

The researcher set up and administrated a Facebook Page for IAPO. Seven IAPO staff members were given administrator access to the Page and all page members were allowed to post and Comment on the Page. The researcher analysed available Facebook information from page members who posted in order to obtain more qualitative data about the members of the Facebook Page.

Adding to the data collected from the Facebook Page, the researcher analysed externally available strategic, review and policy documents for IAPO and UCT as well as obtained student and staff statistics and information from the University's student administration system (PeopleSoft) and from the UCT website (www.uct.ac.za).

6.6 Setting up the Facebook Page

The IAPO @ UCT Facebook Page was set up according to the following settings on the Systems, Information and Communications (SIC) manager's account:

- **Page Visibility:** The Page was published and therefore discoverable to Facebook members.
- **Posting Ability:**
 - Everyone can post to IAPO @ UCT's timeline
 - Everyone can add photos and videos to IAPO @ UCT's timeline
- **Post Visibility:**
 - Allow Posts from others on my Page timeline
 - Highlight recent posts by others in a box at the top of my Page timeline
- **Messages:** messages were not allowed although the option for "Allow people to contact my Page privately by showing the Message button" was occasionally checked by certain page administrators and unchecked by others. The SIC manager maintained that private messages were not necessary as page members were recommended to contact the IAPO email address rather than send Facebook messages to the page.

- **Tagging Ability:** Allow others to tag photos posted by IAPO @ UCT
- **Notifications:** These would differ from administrator to administrator. The SIC manager has Facebook and email notifications enabled, although the email notifications were sent to her Gmail email address.
- **Country restrictions:** Page is viewable to everyone.
- **Page moderation:** No words are blocked from the Page
- **Similar Page Suggestions:** Include IAPO @ UCT when recommending similar pages people might like on a Page timeline.
- **Replies:** Allow replies to Comments on my Page.

The following Page Information was set:

- Name: IAPO @ UCT
- Category: Companies & Organisations: Education
- Subcategories: Education
- Address: Cross Campus Road, Rondebosch, 7701, Cape Town, Western Cape
- Start Info: Founded on [SIC] 1996
- Hours: Monday to Thursday: 8:30 am – 4:30 pm, Friday 8:30 am – 4pm
- Short Description: Welcome to the International Academic Programmes Office (IAPO) at the University of Cape Town
- Founded: 1996
- Parking: Street
- Phone: +27 (0)21 650 2822/3740
- E-mail: int-iapo@uct.ac.za
- Website: <http://www.uct.ac.za/about/iapo/overview/welcome/>
- Facebook ID: 114964565180238
- The public URL for the page was: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/IAPO-UCT/114964565180238>

6.7 Data Analysis Techniques

Qualitative data (from the questionnaires, Facebook Page, events and profiles) was analysed using content analysis where the content and the context of the data was summarised according to the themes chosen to analyse the data, while linking the data to external data relating to the data contributors (Spencer et al., 2003). The data was collected by the researcher using notes typed up in Microsoft Word 2013. Themes were arranged within Evernote 5 2013. Quantitative data from the questionnaires and Facebook was analysed in Microsoft Excel 2013 to see if there were correlations between countries of origin, gender of the student, age and other factors arising from the qualitative categories that emerged.

Analysing Facebook Fan data: The researcher exported Facebook Page level data from Facebook on 13 October 2013 using their newly launched Facebook insights (launched on 9 October 2013) (Facebook, 2013) . The researcher downloaded the files for the period 19 July 2011 (as insights data is not available before this date (Facebook, 2013)) until 30 June 2013 in Microsoft Excel. The researcher investigated the Key Metrics of the Facebook data as well as the Lifetime Likes by age and gender tab and the Lifetime Likes by country. The researcher made sure that the analysis of pictures and other posts relating to offline events were scrutinised to see if the online interaction before, during and after the events affected the integration of students on- and offline. By 30 June 2013, there were 888 Likes on the IAPO @ UCT Page.

The researcher analysed the IAPO page and member profiles. Raw data was analysed using the Analytical Hierarchy approach in Figure 7 (Spencer et al., 2003).

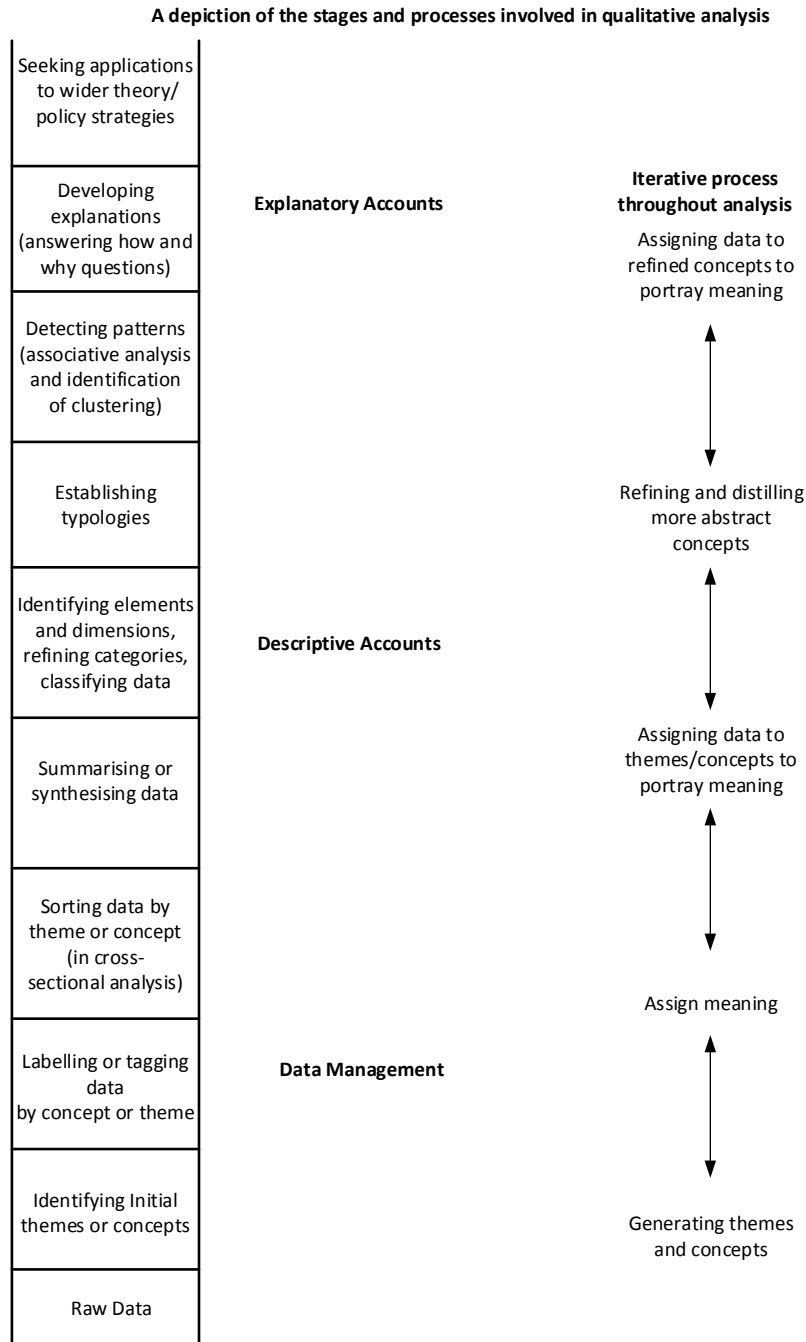


Figure 7: The analytical hierarchy (Spencer et al., 2003)

The raw data that was used consisted of the Facebook posts over the case study time period. Raw data used – Facebook posts, number of posts over the time period. Each post was labelled and

each Facebook Comment, Like or Share was analysed as a user interaction on the Facebook page.

6.8 Coding Procedure for Facebook Page Posts

The researcher coded all the posts appearing on the IAPO @ UCT Page. Posts originating from the IAPO administrators, as well as the posts from the Twitter and Facebook applications, were found under the post filter on the page named “Posts by Page”. The rest of the posts were listed under the page filter of “Posts by Others”. The researcher captured each post appearing on the Page from its inception to the end of June 2013; therefore, all the posts up until 30 June 2013 were analysed. The screenshots were stored in Evernote.

Posts were coded according to the poster (person or application making the post) and their responses in the form “poster type.post number.reply number (if applicable)” e.g. 1.23.4 would be poster type 1 “IAPO @ UCT”, the 23rd post by IAPO @ UCT and the fourth Like, Comment or Share. All original posts as well as the primary responses to the posts were recorded in the form of a Like, Comment or Share. Any replies or Likes to a Comment or Share were not recorded as only the primary responses were coded to make the post numbers manageable. Photo albums, whether they consisted of one or more photographs, were coded as one post but each primary *Comment*, *Like* or *Share* was coded. An example to the post coding is represented in Figure 8.



Figure 8: Coding Post on the IAPO @ UCT Page

6.8.1 Original Posts from the Facebook Application

Posts from the Facebook application were broken down into only four categories, namely:

1. Founded
2. Joined Facebook
3. New Likes
4. Activity

These four categories naturally arose from qualitative post analysis and were not further analysed as the ability for individuals to Like, Comment or Share these posts was not possible on Facebook.

6.9 Ethical Issues

Students and staff members are not identified or singled out in the research and thus remained anonymous. Students completing the questionnaire were asked for their student numbers if they were prepared to supply them. Their names were not be used for analysis but their gender,

country of origin and age were analysed using the UCT PeopleSoft system to ascertain the take up differences by age, gender and country of origin. Although actor's names were reflected on the IAPO Facebook Page, these names were not recorded in the researcher's findings. The sample questionnaire was designed in an ethical manner so as not to offend the respondents. Respondents were not forced in any way to complete the questionnaire and could abandon answering the questions if they no longer desired to complete it. Individuals were free to join or leave the IAPO @ UCT Page at any time.

6.10 Limitations to the Research

A limitation to this research is that data on silent user actions on Facebook, such as browsing profile pages or viewing page photographs, was not collected. Silent user action would have aided in displaying a more accurate and comprehensive view of what the users do on Facebook, but this is outside the scope of this research (Benevenuto et al., 2009).

Tensions may have arisen when staff and students, who are already using Facebook, were asked to use Facebook for UCT purposes as this may have been seen like an invasion on their privacy. They may have been unwilling to mix their friends and colleagues on Facebook (Skeels & Grudin, 2009), especially since Facebook was previously used by other universities to record illegal student behaviour (Bugeja, 2006). Hopefully, the introduction of Facebook in an academic and work environment did not damage the informal friendliness of Facebook (Skeels & Grudin, 2009).

UCT previously dissuaded staff and students from using SNS during working hours (which are stated as between 8 am and 5 pm on weekdays) due to bandwidth restrictions in 2009 (University of Cape Town, 2009). Bandwidth was capped for SNS use during this time and a pop-up notice was displayed to all staff and students trying to access a SNS (as illustrated in Addendum A). This may have dissuaded individuals from using SNS while the pop-up notice was still in effect. The increase in bandwidth to the university began in 2010 and ICTS removed the pop-up notice although there may have been lingering impressions throughout the UCT community that a SNS was not appropriate for academic use.

7 Findings

7.1 Methodological Issues

In order to address the research question and sub-questions, the posts and participants on the IAPO @ UCT Page were analysed as set out in the methodology section. The analysis of the posts allowed the researcher to identify interactions on IAPO @ UCT and to analyse these interactions according to the theoretical lenses chosen to address the research questions. The findings section commences with a summary of the post types and numbers created by IAPO @ UCT, the Facebook application and the Facebook posters interacting on the Page (referred to as “Posts by Others”). The Facebook members who chose to Like the IAPO @ UCT Page, for the purposes of this study, are referred to as likers. The insights of the page likers, provided by Facebook, were scrutinized to ascertain the characteristics of these likers. There were 888 Facebook Page likers compared to 372 Facebook posters.

The posts made by IAPO @ UCT as well as the “Posts by Others” were analysed according to themes and concepts. The themes and concepts that arose from the post data were analysed to see what types of information was provided by the Page or requested from the original page posters. The theories outlined in the literature review were then applied to the IAPO case study. ANT was used as the main theory to describe the interaction between the various actors through the process of translation. Concepts from Networking, Social Capital, Social Identity and Social Presence were described in the IAPO context. Finally, the research questions were addressed according to phenomena that came to light through the case study findings. The discussion of the findings follows in the subsequent section of the thesis.

7.1.1 Original Posts by Page

There were 346 posts that appeared to have originated from the IAPO @ UCT Page. These posts can be found on the IAPO @ UCT Page when using the page filter of “Posts by Page”. These posts were made by a page administrator (one of the seven page administrators from IAPO that cannot be individually recognised) while other posts came from Twitter (which only appeared from January 2013 onwards when the IAPOatUCT Twitter page was created). Two of the IAPO

@ UCT page administrators had access to the IAPOatUCT Twitter profile and were therefore able to post on Twitter. These Twitter posts automatically appeared on the IAPO @ UCT Facebook Page because the Twitter and Facebook Page profiles were linked via an application. Posts from Twitter were, therefore, included in this tally because these posts were replicated onto Facebook and it seemed as if they had originated from the IAPO @ UCT Page. An example to illustrate the way that the Twitter posts appear on Facebook is given in Figure 9.



Figure 9: IAPO @ UCT Facebook Page Posts from Twitter

At the top of the post, the post is labelled as originating from IAPO @ UCT (the Facebook Page). Twitter is mentioned as the original location of the photograph (pic.twitter.com) as well as in the footer of the post e.g. “@IAPOatUCT on Twitter”. This is very similar to a post that originates from an administrator who posts on the page as IAPO @ UCT such as in Figure 10.



Figure 10: IAPO @ UCT Facebook Page Post

IAPO @ UCT is listed as the poster and the link is embedded similar to the Twitter example. The only significant difference is that the phrase “@IAPOatUCT on Twitter” is not present on the administrator’s post directly to Facebook.

7.1.2 Original Posts from Facebook

There were 15 posts that seemed to originate from the Facebook application as opposed to the Facebook Page. Although these posts are listed under the page filter of “Posts by Page”, these posts differ from the IAPO @ UCT and Twitter posts mentioned above because they communicated information about the page as if in the “third person”. An example to illustrate this difference is given in Figure 11.



Figure 11: Posts from the Facebook Application

In Figure 11, the header of the post is not labelled as originating from IAPO @ UCT. Instead, the body of the posts communicated information about the page and therefore seemed to distance itself from the page as if it is an entirely different poster altogether. Facebook users are also not able to Like, Comment or Share these posts. For these reasons, posts that seemed to originate from the Facebook application alone were excluded from further analysis.

7.1.3 Original posts from “Others”

There were 104 posts from original posters on the IAPO @ UCT Page. An example of this type of post is given in Figure 12. Original posts from posters, like the one in Figure 12, display the Facebook member’s name in the header and can be seen as originating from a third party (which may be another page or an individual with a Facebook account).



Figure 12: Post from IAPO @ UCT Facebook Page Members

Once all the posts were coded according to the posters, the researcher went through each post, many times, to categorise them into initial themes and concepts. The Comments, Likes and Shares were counted and listed under the person or page who made them and a profile was collected for each poster, where possible, from information from Facebook, PeopleSoft and the UCT electronic White Pages. These profiles are described in the following section.

7.1.4 Poster Profiles

There were 395 profiles that posted Liked, Commented or Shared information from the IAPO @UCT Page (including the IAPO @UCT Page itself). Out of these page reactions, 65 profiles were original posters on the Page (including IAPO @UCT). In order to collect information about the posters on the Page, the researcher created a profile for each individual or page that interacted on the IAPO @UCT Page in order to collect information relevant to this thesis. The researcher checked each individual or page profile for the following information, shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Labelling Poster Profiles

Label	Description
Number	A unique identifier used for Excel calculations.
Name	The name, consisting of the first name, second name and surname for individuals or the name of the page. Some individuals used pseudonyms or nicknames and not all individuals included their second name.
Age	The age of individuals who have a Facebook profile, on 30 June 2013. The age of pages and institutions using a Facebook profile was not collected.
Gender	The gender of individuals, where this was available.
Type	Individuals with a Facebook profile were listed as “person”, page profiles were recorded as “page” and institutions who used a Facebook profile instead of a page were listed as “profile”. This was ascertained by clicking on the link of the profile to see if it was a Facebook page or personal profile or a personal profile that was used as a page.
Citizenship	Where individuals have their primary citizenship. Page nationality was not recorded.
Roles 1 and 2	The researcher analysed each profile to see what roles the individual or page was acting in. Where an individual was listed in the PeopleSoft system as an IFD or SSA student, this role was easily assigned. The rest of the roles were assigned at the discretion of the researcher. If the researcher was not able to identify the profile from either Facebook or PeopleSoft, or from personal interactions with the profiles, the profiles were labelled as “unknown”. Where a poster acted in more than one role, their other role was assigned. The researcher did not find any profiles that obviously acted in more than two roles.

Original Posts	The number of original posts, if any, was tallied against the individual, page or profile.
Likes	The number of Likes, if any, was tallied against the individual, page or profile.
Comments	The number of Comments, if any, was tallied against the individual, page or profile.
Shares	The number of Shares, if any, was tallied against the individual, page or profile.

To access information about an individual or page, the researcher used her personal profile to access this information as the Facebook security settings for pages did not allow public information on personal profiles to be visible. The different poster demographics are further investigated in the sub-sections to follow.

7.1.4.1 Age

Posters who were not identified in the university's PeopleSoft system where hard to assign an age. If the poster had relaxed privacy settings or was a friend of the researcher on Facebook, the exact age could be ascertained through Facebook. However, 38% of the posters' ages could not be ascertained and 5.8 % of the posters where pages or institutions that used Facebook profiles and thus did not have an age assigned to them. Of the remaining posters, their ages ranged from 18 to 65 years of age as shown in Figure 13.

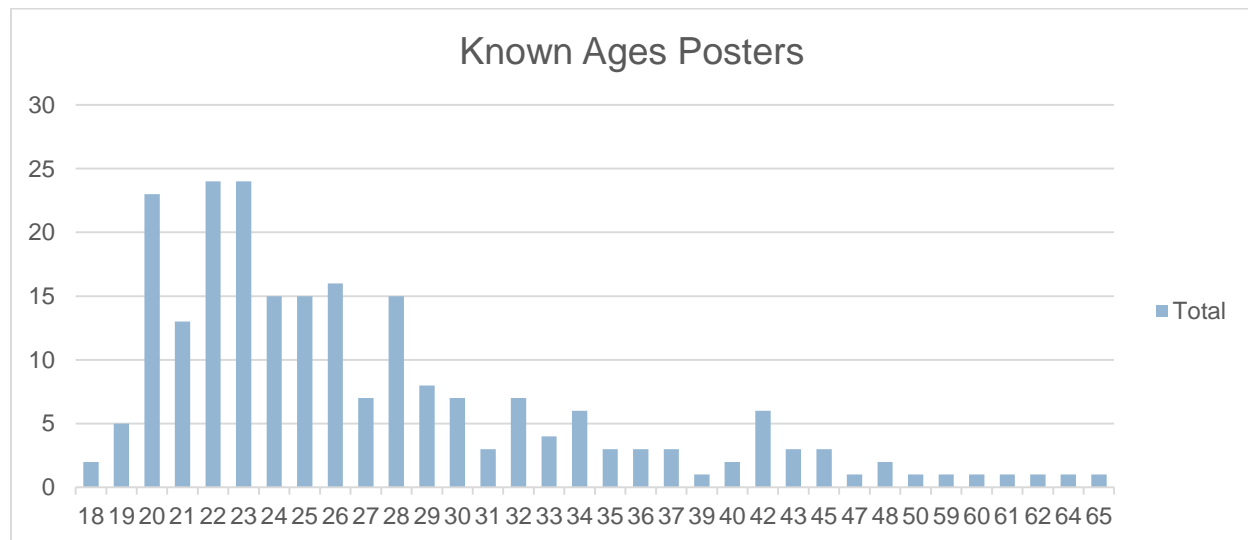


Figure 13: Poster Age Range

The age distribution for posters posting original posts on the IAPO @ UCT Page was much different. The age of these individuals ranged only from 18 to 36 years of age with the majority of the posters falling between 20 and 25 years of age as shown in Figure 14.

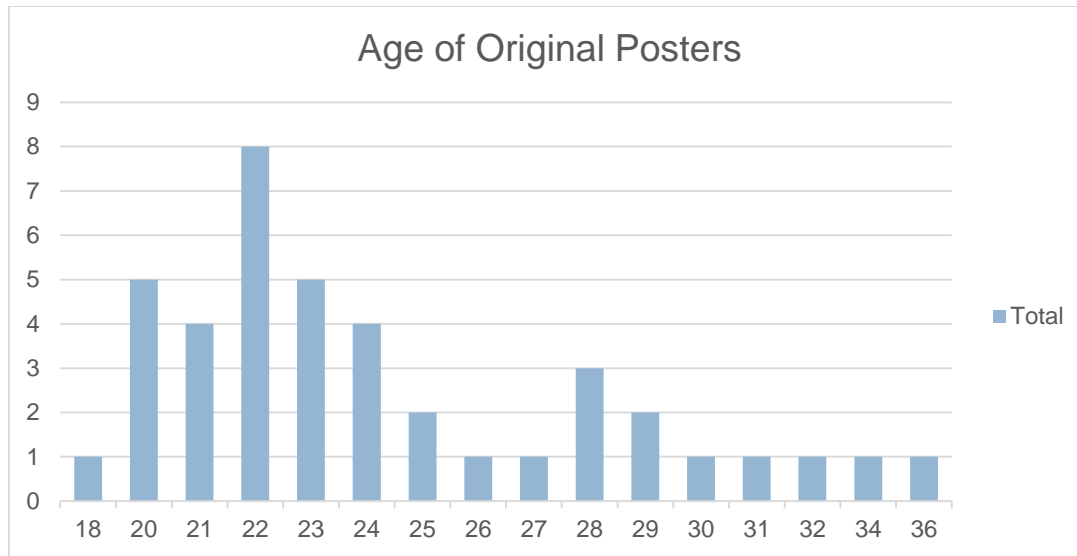


Figure 14: Age of Original Posters

Individuals who Liked posts on the page ranged from 19 to 65 years of age. The majority of likers fell between 20 and 35 years of age. Commenters ranged from 18 to 65 years of age with the majority between 20 and 28 years old. Sharers ranged from 20 to 45 years old with the majority of sharers between 20 and 28 years old.

7.1.4.2 Gender

The gender of individuals was easily determined as if the gender information was readily available from Facebook and PeopleSoft. Only individuals who were no longer on Facebook or had very stringent Facebook settings hid their gender. There were 23 pages and institutional profiles that did not have a gender and only ten personal profiles where the gender was not available. The genders of the rest of the Facebook individuals are depicted in Figure 15.

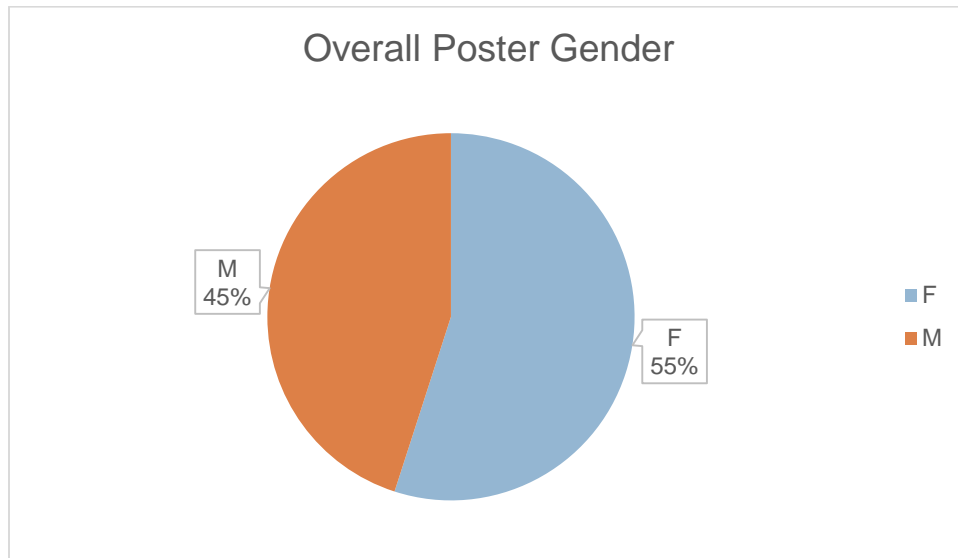


Figure 15: Poster Gender

There were 10% more females than males who interacted on the IAPO @ UCT Facebook Page with original posts, Likes, Comments or Shares. However, more male individuals posted original posts on the IAPO @ UCT Page (53%) compared to their female counterparts (47%). Females (56%) were more likely to “Like” a post than males (44%), with exactly the same percentage of females (56%) making a Comment on posts compared to (44%) males. Males (57%) were more likely, however, to “Share” posts than females (43%).

7.1.4.3 Citizenship

Individuals from 45 different countries interacted visibly on the IAPO @ UCT Facebook Page. Out of the 372 individuals who interacted on the Page, there were 56 individual profiles (15%) where the country of origin was not available on Facebook or PeopleSoft. Individuals from South Africa were the biggest contributors with 95 visible page interactions. Citizens of the United States contributed with 33, of Zimbabwe 28, of Germany 15, of Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) 12, of Kenya 11 and of Nigeria 10.

When filtering the interactions by type, original page posters showed that South African citizens were the largest contributing group with 26 posts, while United States citizens posted 11 and Lesotho citizens posted 6. Top page Like contributors were 207 from South Africa, 71 were

unknown, 49 were from Lesotho, 49 from the United States and 45 from Zimbabwe. Top Comment contributors were 51 from South Africa, 32 unknown, 10 each from the DRC, Malawi and the United States. Top Shares were eight from Zimbabwe and five from South Africa.

In order to see the foreign contributions more clearly, South Africa and the unknown posters were omitted from Figure 16 that illustrates the original posts, Likes, Comments and Shares by citizenship.

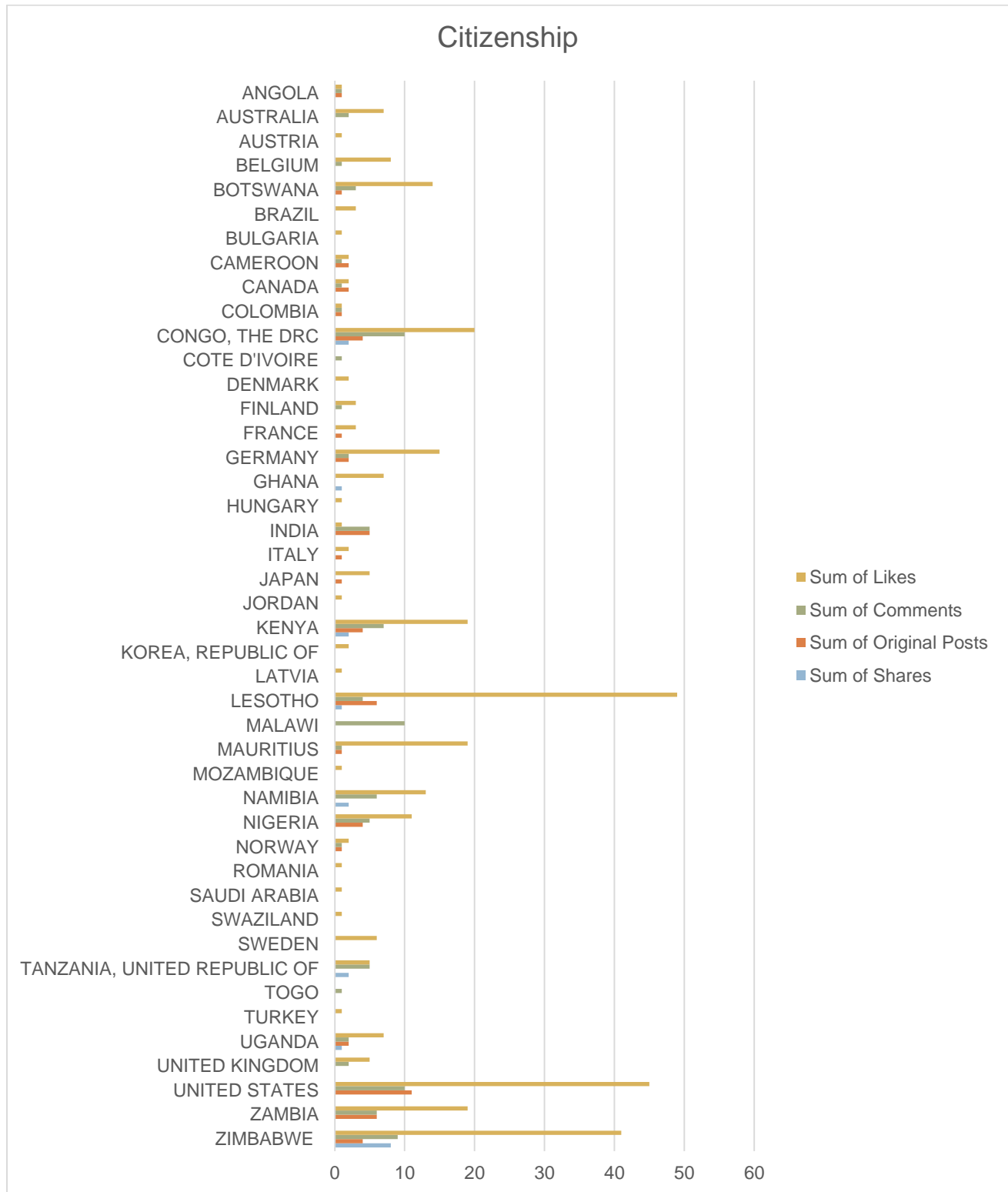


Figure 16: Citizenship of Page Posters

7.1.4.4 Roles

Each poster was scrutinized to see what roles they were playing while interacting on the IAPO @UCT Page. Where the researcher knew the poster, roles were easier to assign; however, some roles were patent through the posts, the page interaction and the PeopleSoft and Facebook data that was available. The researcher assigned up to three roles per profile of a person (pages and institution profiles were excluded); however, since there weren't any profiles that clearly acted in more than two roles, the third role column was deleted in the analysis. There were 276 profiles that acted in a primary role that were identifiable to the researcher. There were 96 profiles listed as "unknown". The largest group of the known posters was for IFD students (121), followed by South African Students (SAS – 42), Friends of individuals on the Page (39), Applicants (23), and SSA students. Only 12 individuals clearly acted in more than one role that was patent to the researcher. The highest number of secondary roles was SAS (7), IAPO staff members (3), with one alumni and one IFD student. This is illustrated in Figure 17.

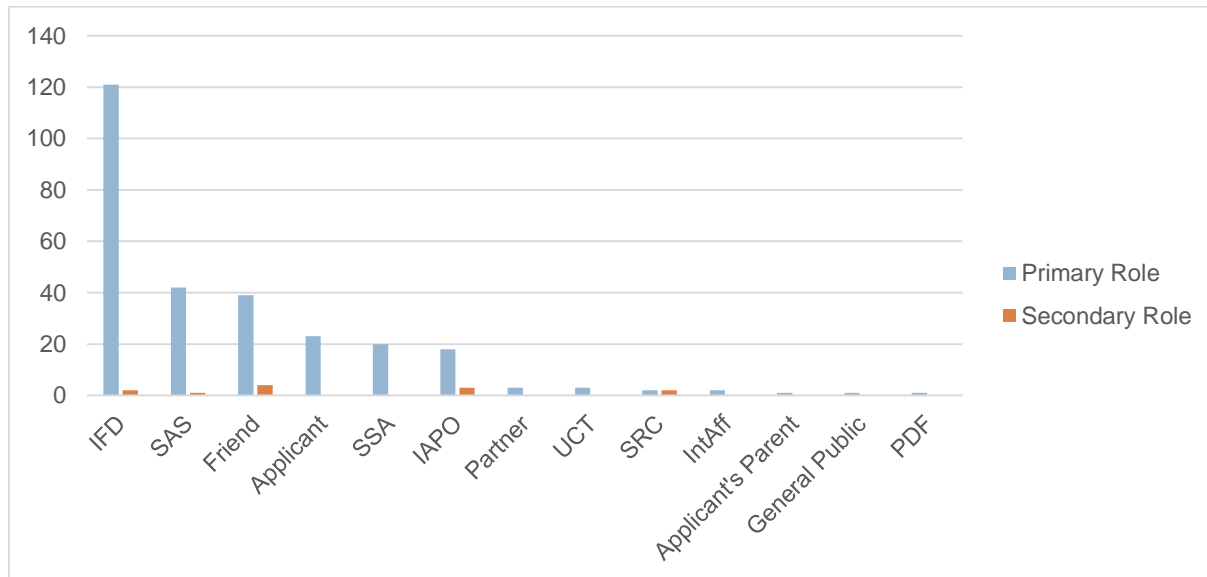


Figure 17: Roles of Page Posters

7.1.4.5 Unknown Values

There was a large number of unknown values throughout the dataset. Besides individuals who used anonymous profiles or pseudonyms, unknown values would occur where the researcher was

not able to ascertain values through PeopleSoft or Facebook. These unknown values could indicate that these individuals were not an existing part of the university's stakeholders and, therefore, could be bringing new individuals onto the page; however, if they were the result of pseudonyms, this would not be the case.

7.2 Initial Themes and Concepts

The researcher analysed each post from the IAPO @ UCT Page in order to ascertain what categories the posts would fit into. The roles were used to identify if there were groupings of page posters who could be identified as nodes or hubs/supernodes. This process was repeated many times to refine the post types; some posts were categorised up to three times but only where the post fit into more than one category. The first category would be the strongest fit for the post and the third category would be the weakest fit for the post. There were, therefore, more categories than posts. Only original posts were categorised and not the Comments made of the original posts.

7.2.1 Posts by the IAPO @ UCT Page – Administrators and Twitter

Each post was labelled three times according to the categories in Table 5.

Table 5: Post Categories for Posts from IAPO @ UCT Administrators and Twitter

Category	Description
UCT Administrative Information	General information about UCT administrative processes and procedures that are not specified below (as the rest of the administrative processes were assigned their own categories)
IAPO Administrative Information	General information about IAPO administrative processes and procedures. Some of the significant administrative processes were assigned their own categories. Seven of these categories are listed below:
Pre-registration Information	Information about the pre-registration process at IAPO.
Admission Information	Information about Admission to UCT
Medical Aid Information	Information about medical aid options, costs and other administration such as collecting cards
Information about Jobs	Information about available jobs
Visa Information	Information about applying for and renewing visas through the South African Home Affairs and international embassies.

Category	Description
Accommodation Information	Information about available accommodation in near the UCT campus in Cape Town.
Fee/Scholarship Information	Information about fees, scholarships, bursaries and exchange opportunities.
Information about UCT	General information about UCT – excluding administrative information.
Information about IAPO	General information about IAPO – excluding administrative information.
Information about IAPO @ UCT Page	Information about the IAPO @ UCT Page administration
External events	Information about events not related to UCT
IAPO Photo Album	Individual or multiple photographs of IAPO activities
UCT Events	Information about UCT events
Partner Information	Information about IAPO partners
General Pleasantries	Conversational and general statements not specific to UCT or IAPO
IAPO Events	Information about events hosted by IAPO
UCT Photo Album	Individual or multiple photographs of UCT activities (excluding IAPO specific activities)
UCT Competition	Information about competitions held by UCT
External competition	A competition that is not held by any UCT faculty or department

The best fit for the post was listed first, the second best fit listed next and finally the third best fit was listed last. Labelling each post three times was beneficial in narrowing down to more specific post types. A post labelled as “IAPO Administrative Information” could be further explained by the type of administrative information such as “Pre-registration information”.

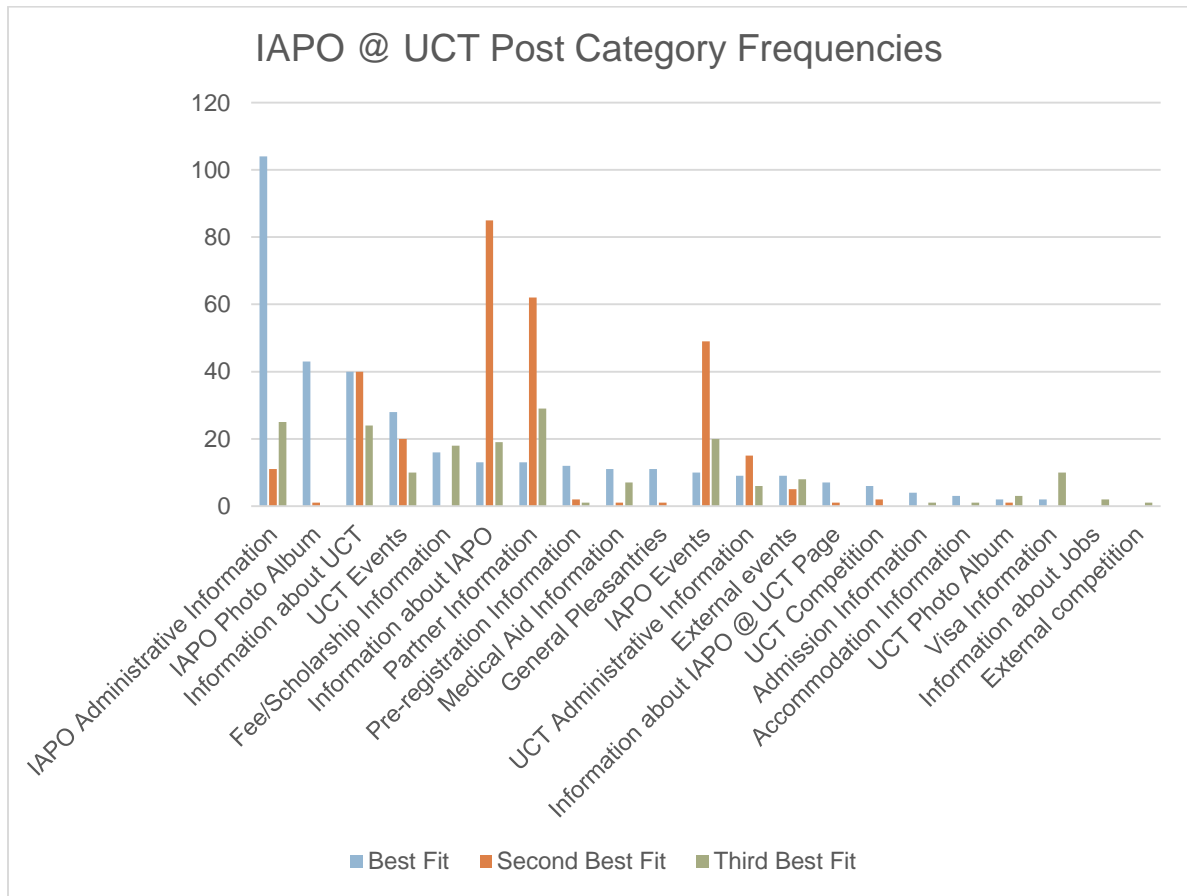


Figure 18: IAPO @ UCT Post Category Frequencies

The category frequency by best fit was ordered from left to right by Best Fit, Second Best Fit and finally Third Best Fit in Figure 18. IAPO Administrative Information is the highest ranking Best Fit, IAPO Photo Album was the next high ranking Best Fit with Information about UCT as the third most reported Best Fit. Information about IAPO, Partner Information and IAPO Events were popular second Best Fits. Looking at the categories in another way, the three Best Fit categories were added together to highlight the overall frequency of the categories.

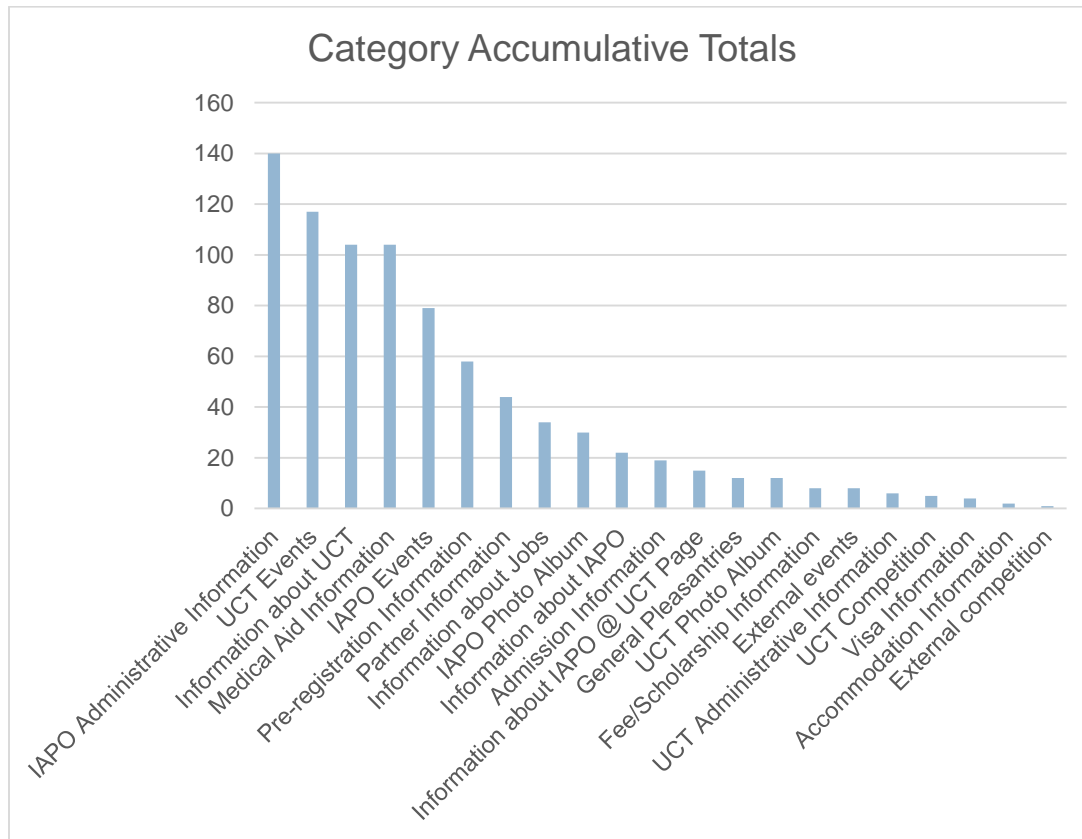


Figure 19: Category Accumulative Totals

Totalling the First-, Second- and Third Best Fit categories highlights post types that IAPO @ UCT thought their stakeholders would be interested in (illustrated in Figure 19). IAPO Administrative Information was the most popular post category overall, UCT Events and Information about UCT/Medical Aid Information were also highly used as the second, third and fourth most popular categories. In the next section, the categorisation of the original posts from the IAPO @ UCT posters is described.

7.2.2 Original Posts from IAPO @ UCT Posters

The table below indicates how the original posts from IAPO @ UCT posters were categorised.

Table 6: Categories of Original Posts

Category	Description
Greetings	A general greeting from the poster on the page
Administrative Questions	A general question about an administrative procedure or process
Page Sharing or Advertising	Sharing the link to another page or advertising a commercial product
Personal Advertising	A post promoting a non-commercial item for sale or the services of the poster
Questions or comments about IAPO@UCT Page	A post requesting more information about the IAPO @ UCT Page
Event Sharing	Sharing an off-line event on the Page
Article/Information Sharing	Sharing a link to an article or posting information about something external to UCT
UCT Sharing	Sharing information about student organisations or other faculties or departments at UCT
Personal Sharing	Sharing personal information or beliefs on the Page
Identity Confusion	Sharing an item from an individual's personal Facebook profile when they should have been posting as the IAPO @ UCT Page
Administrative Sharing	Sharing IAPO administrative processes or procedures
Compliments	Complementing the service received from IAPO
Complaints	Complaining about the service received from IAPO

In the same way that the posts from IAPO @ UCT were categorised, the posts from the IAPO @ UCT posters were analysed three times according to Best-, Second Best- and Third Best Fit. The results of the categorisation are outlined in Figure 20.

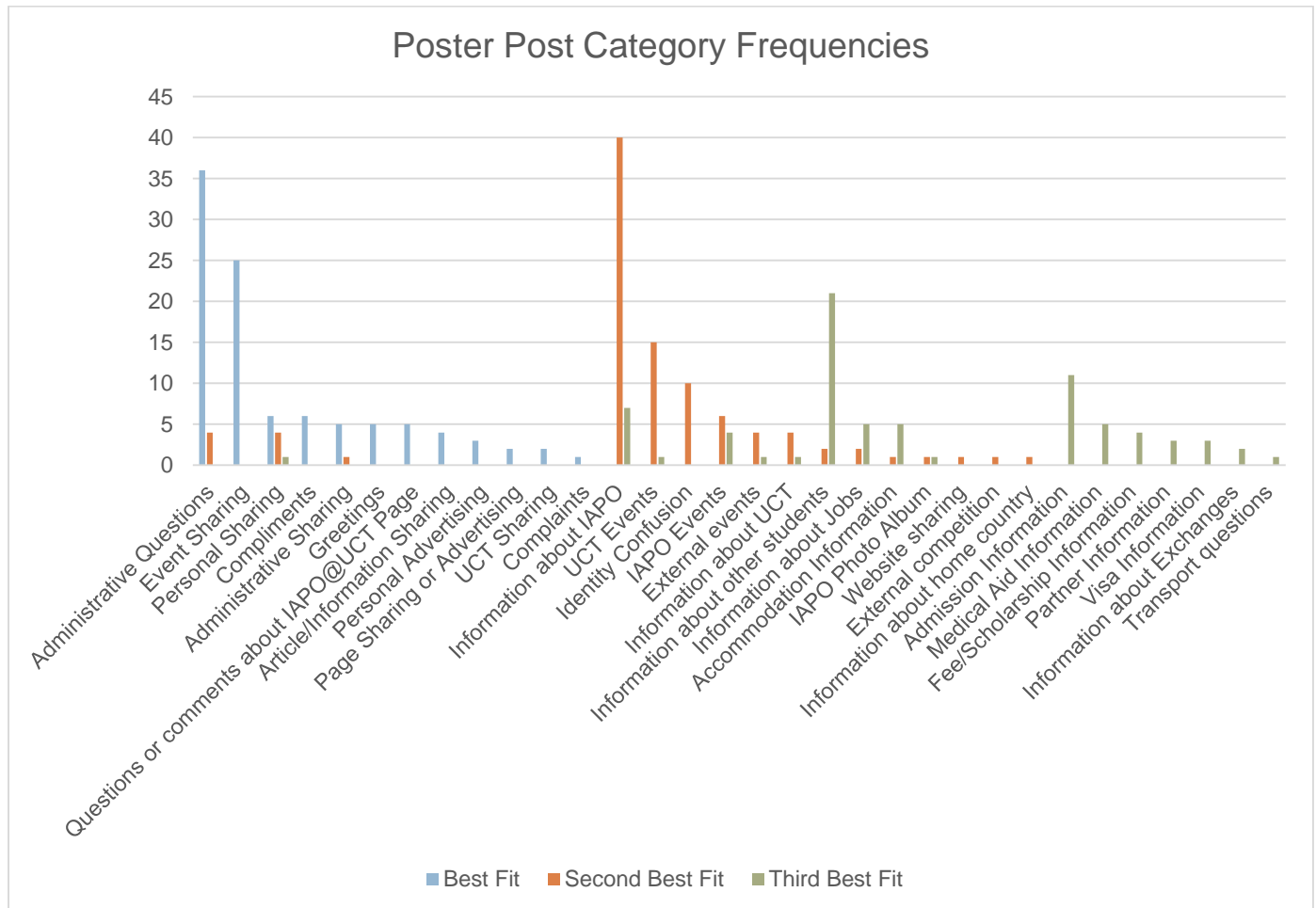


Figure 20: Original Post Categories from IAPO @ UCT Posters

The visual description of the original post categories for the IAPO @ UCT Page posters shows that Administrative Questions was the most popular post type for Best Fit, followed by Event Sharing. The most frequently used Second-Best Fit categories were Information about IAPO and UCT Events. The highest ranking Third Best Fits were Information about Other Students and Admission Information. The categories for First-, Second- and Third Best Fit were all added together in order to see if there were any frequently used categories despite the fit order. The accumulative counts for the overall category use is depicted in Figure 21.

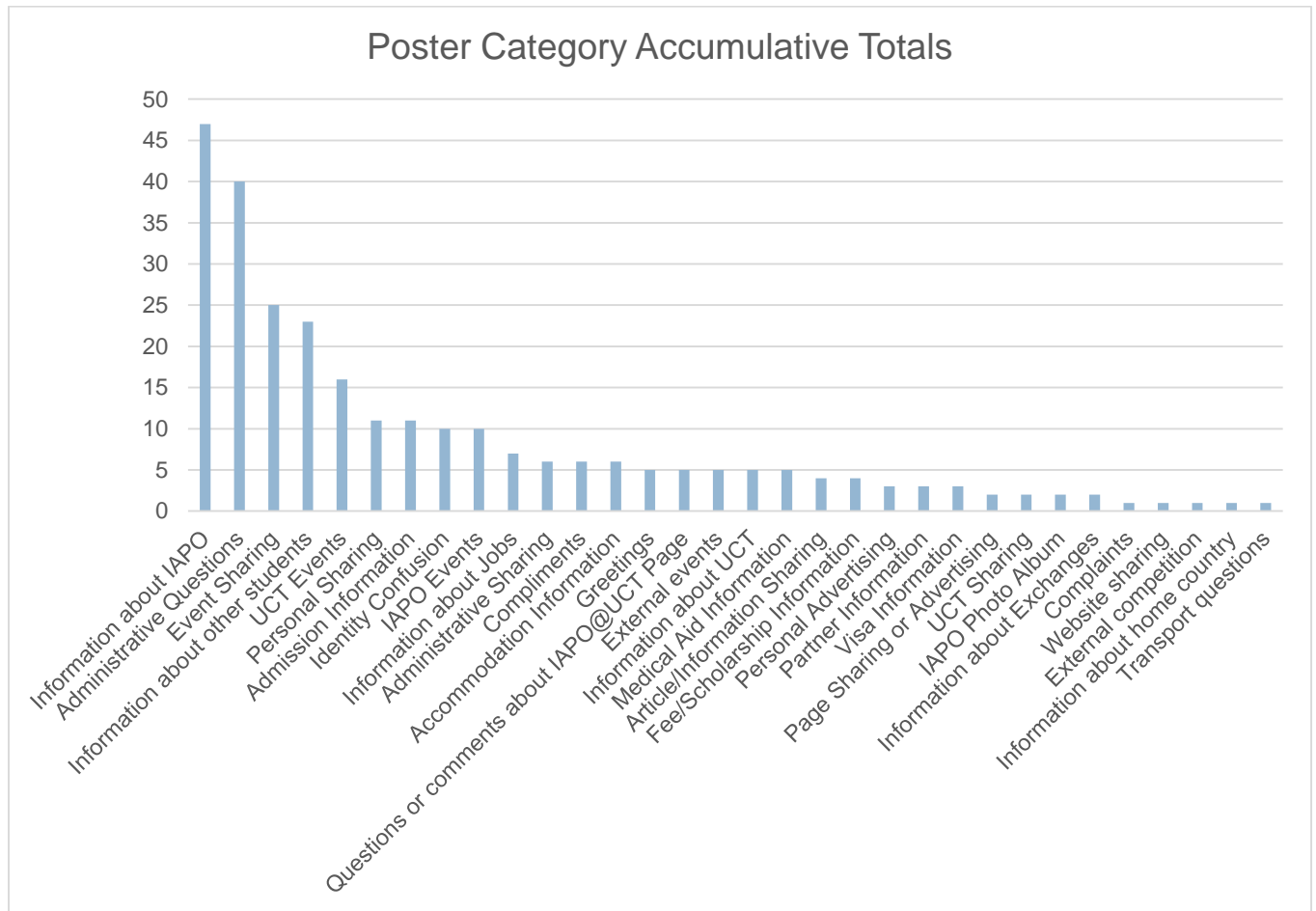


Figure 21: Poster Category Accumulative Totals

Adding all the categories together, despite the fit, showed that Information about IAPO was the most popular post category for IAPO @ UCT posters. Administrative Questions and Event Sharing followed information about IAPO as the second and third most popular post categories.

The next section of the thesis explains the Facebook insights for IAPO @ UCT. The differences between the post categories by IAPO @ UCT and the IAPO @ UCT Page posters will be addressed in the discussion of the findings.

7.3 Facebook Page Level Insights

Facebook page level insights were used to ascertain what kind of individuals Liked the Facebook page IAPO @ UCT. The insights were downloaded directly from Facebook for the period

between the 19 July 2011 and 30 June in 2013. Insights before 19 July 2011 were not available for download. Facebook discontinued downloadable page insights before 19 July 2011 as this was when a new format for insights was launched (Facebook, 2013).

Available on Facebook insights was the growth of IAPO @ UCT Page Likes over time. Figure 22 shows the steady growth of likes up to 888 likes on 30 June 2013 from just over 300 likes on 19 July 2011. Overall likes in indicated in blue and new likes, in the same time period, are indicated in orange.

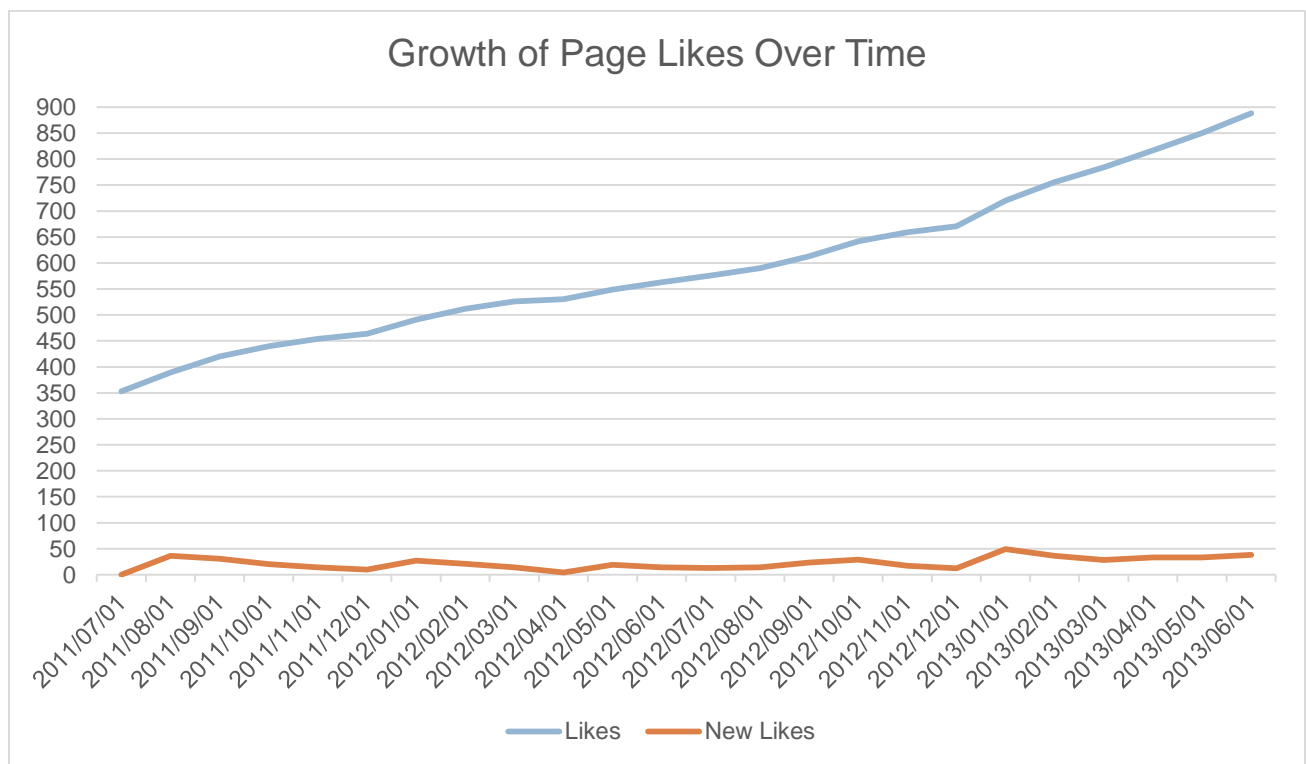


Figure 22: Growth of Facebook Likes Over Time on IAPO @ UCT

Figure 23 shows the gender differences in page Likes on IAPO @ UCT. Female individuals made up most of the Facebook Page Likes at 91% (807 Likes). Male Likes were only 9% and there were no unknown genders who Liked the IAPO @ UCT Page. The large gender discrepancy will be further explained in the discussion on the findings in the next chapter. The difference between the gender distribution of the page likers and the page posters will be unpacked as part of this discussion.

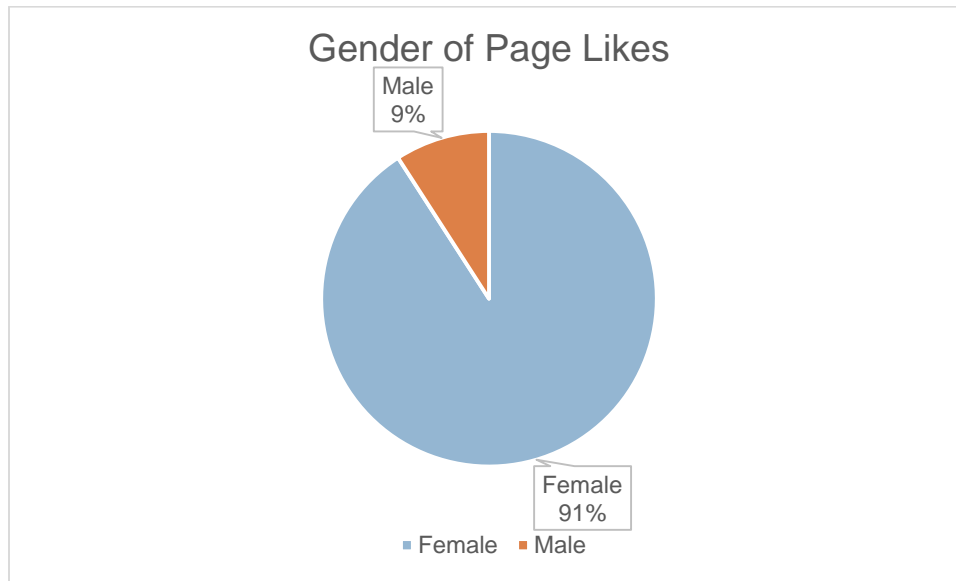


Figure 23: Gender of Page Likes

Figure 24 shows the spread of ages of the IAPO @ UCT page likers. The ages of the individuals who Liked the page varied with the bulk of the Facebook Likes coming from individuals who were older than 55 (42%) and between 13 and 17 years old (31%). There were no unknown ages of individuals who Liked the IAPO @ UCT Page.

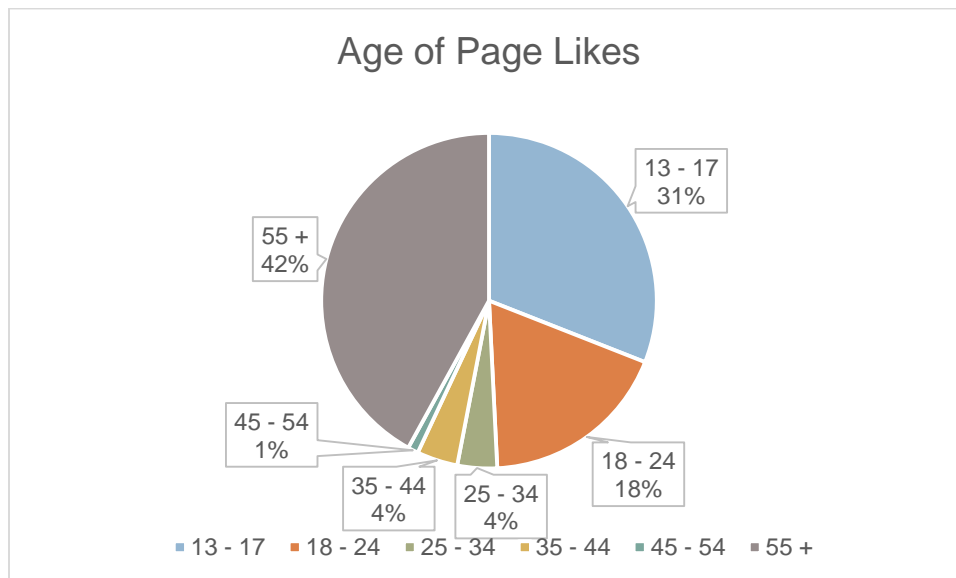


Figure 24: Age of Page Likes

The page insights stored the countries of individuals who liked the IAPO @ UCT Page. These countries are represented in Figure 25. Facebook used country codes and gave the numbers of individuals who came from those countries. The countries are based on the IP addresses of the individuals who Liked the page and not necessarily where they were from originally (Facebook, 2014). South Africa was by far the best represented country with 441 Likes for this reason. All SSA and IFD students already at UCT would be listed under South Africa had they been accessing Facebook while in South Africa. This country data, therefore, would be more useful to see where applicants, partners or alumni might be accessing the Page from and not existing students who are on the UCT campus. South Africa was, therefore, removed from Figure 25 so that the countries of applicants, partners, alumni and any other page likers could be seen more clearly. Unknown countries were also removed.

The United States was the largest foreign contributor with 102 likes. Germany was second with 35 Likes and third was both India and Zimbabwe with 23 Likes each. Nigeria was a close fifth with 22 Likes. These Likes could indicate interest from individuals in other countries in connecting with IAPO and UCT. They may be applicants seeking information, partners seeking alliances or alumni wanting to keep in contact with their alma mater.



Figure 25: Country of Page Likes

The counties of the page likers, as well as the rest of the Facebook insights for the IAPO @ UCT Page, will be compared to the Page posters in the discussions section of the thesis. The next section of the thesis will address the utilization of appropriate theories as proposed in the literature review.

7.4 Using ANT as a Lens

The researcher has categorised the activity on the IAPO @ UCT Page according to ANT concepts as described in Table 1.

7.4.1 Moments of Translation

The moments of translation are explained in the following sections in four stages:

1. Problematisation
2. Interessement
3. Enrolment
4. Mobilisation

Before the moments of translation are extrapolated, the Actors, Actor Network, Obligatory Passage Point and the concept of a Black Box are explained in the context of ANT and IAPO @ UCT. The definition of these concepts are required to explain the moments of translation that occurred on IAPO @ UCT.

7.4.1.1 Actors

The focal actor is IAPO. As set out in the case study, IAPO has the agenda of facilitating internationalisation at UCT and required assistance in aiding interaction between their stakeholders. The IAPO @ UCT Page was set up by IAPO to aid online interaction between their stakeholders, thus forming another actor for analysis. The other actors, identified for interacting on IAPO @ UCT through the post analysis, are the Facebook application and the page posters. All the actors are described in Table 7.

Table 7: IAPO @ UCT Actors

Actor	Description
IAPO	IAPO is the focal actor who set up the IAPO @ UCT Page and is an administrative department at UCT.
IAPO @ UCT	The IAPO @ UCT Page consists of two other actors i.e. page administrators and the Twitter posts that automatically appear on the Page. The reason the page administrators are listed together with the automated posts from the Twitter application is because all these posts seem like they emanated from the page.
1. Page Administrators	There are seven IAPO staff members, who cannot individually be identified, who are able to post on the page.
2. Twitter	The Twitter application that posts on the IAPO @ UCT Page as Twitter.
Facebook	The Facebook application that posts on the IAPO @ UCT Page. Facebook is listed as a separate actor because it “talks” about the IAPO @ UCT Page in the third person as if it is separate from the Page. This actor also provides page insights that the researcher used to analyse page activity.
Page Posters	Various individual actors, consisting of different individuals who either Liked the IAPO @ UCT Page or wrote an original post on the IAPO @ UCT timeline, Liked, Commented or Shared page posts. The eleven sub-actors, when opening the black box of page posters, are:
1. UCT Students	<p>IFD Student: UCT IFD students posting on the IAPO @ UCT Page with their personal Facebook profiles.</p> <p>SSA Student: UCT SSA students posting on the IAPO @ UCT Page with their personal Facebook profiles.</p> <p>SA Student: UCT SA students posting on the IAPO @ UCT Page with their personal Facebook profiles.</p> <p>International Affiliates: UCT International Affiliates posting on the IAPO @ UCT Page with their personal Facebook profiles.</p> <p>Post-Doctoral Fellow: UCT post-doctoral fellows posting on the IAPO @ UCT Page with their personal Facebook profiles.</p>
2. IAPO Staff	IAPO staff members who post on the IAPO @ UCT Page with their personal Facebook profiles. The page administrators can also post on the page in their personal capacities.
3. UCT Staff	UCT staff members who post on the IAPO @ UCT Page with their personal Facebook profiles. This excludes IAPO staff members.
4. Applicant	UCT applicants or aspiring UCT students posting on the IAPO @ UCT Page with their personal Facebook profiles.
5. Applicant’s parent	Parents who requested information on IAPO @ UCT on behalf of their applicant offspring.
6. Partner	A partner who posts on the IAPO @ UCT Page with their personal Facebook profiles.

7. Pages	Pages that are set up by individuals or organisations who post on the IAPO @ UCT Page as the identity of their page.
8. Alumni	Previous UCT students who have graduated or completed their UCT courses.
9. Friend	There were individuals who were friends of UCT students, staff members or other IAPO stakeholders who became page posters on IAPO @ UCT
10. General Public	Individuals who have been identified but appear to have no known affiliation to UCT or other page posters.
11. Unknown	Unknown individuals posting on IAPO @ UCT with their personal Facebook profiles. If their role could not be determined through Facebook or PeopleSoft, or if they were not known to the researcher, these actors were labelled as Unknown.

7.4.1.2 Actor Network

A diverse set of actors on the SNS Facebook joined the IAPO @ UCT Page where they all aligned their interests to interact in this specific online environment. The online environment was the IAPO @ UCT Page where actors were invited to Like the Page and/or participate on the Page timeline by writing original posts or reacting to posts through Likes, Comments and Shares.

The interests of the actors on the IAPO @ UCT Page were revealed in the categories of Posts, Comments, Likes and Shares that emerged from the analysis of all posts on the IAPO @ UCT Page. They are:

1. Seeking or advising on administrative issues for UCT or IAPO. The areas of administrative interest include pre-registration information, admission information, medical aid information, visa requirements, accommodation information and fee/scholarship information.
2. Seeking or advertising general information about UCT, IAPO or a partner.
3. Event sharing for UCT, IAPO, partners or external events.
4. Photo sharing for UCT, IAPO, partners or external photos.
5. Information about the IAPO @ UCT Page.
6. Exchanging general pleasantries, introductions and greetings.
7. Information about competitions

The IAPO @ UCT Page was set up by the IAPO actor who is the focal actor.

7.4.1.3 Obligatory Passage Point (OPP)

The OPP for IAPO is the goal of the IAPO actor, namely: “Can IAPO @ UCT facilitate internationalisation at UCT?”. The problematisation for the actors is described in Table 7. The focal actor, IAPO, convinces the other actors to align their interests in order to achieve the facilitation of internationalisation at UCT. If IAPO @ UCT is used to promote internationalisation at UCT, the OPP, and goal of IAPO, would be achieved.

7.4.1.4 Black Box

Was IAPO @ UCT seen as a Black Box to the other actors? Certainly, the page administrators could not be individually identified on IAPO @ UCT and, therefore, formed a black box that could not be unpacked by the other actors – not even the other page administrators. The Twitter posts, if scrutinized, could possibly be identified as originating from Twitter but the way that the posts were labelled by Facebook indicates that they emanated from IAPO @ UCT. Page posters seemed to imply that IAPO and IAPO @ UCT were the same entity and, therefore, could also seem as if they were a black box. For the purposes of this analysis, however, IAPO and IAPO @ UCT are listed as separate actors because IAPO is the focal actor and not IAPO @ UCT. The distinction between IAPO and IAPO @ UCT is important since they act in different ways. This will be articulated in the Problematisation.

7.4.2 Problematisation

The first moment of translation occurred when the focal actor created the IAPO @ UCT Page. As soon as the Page was created, the “IAPO @ UCT” actor claimed an identity for the first time. IAPO @ UCT was a black box consisting of the IAPO administrator actor and, later, the Twitter application actor.

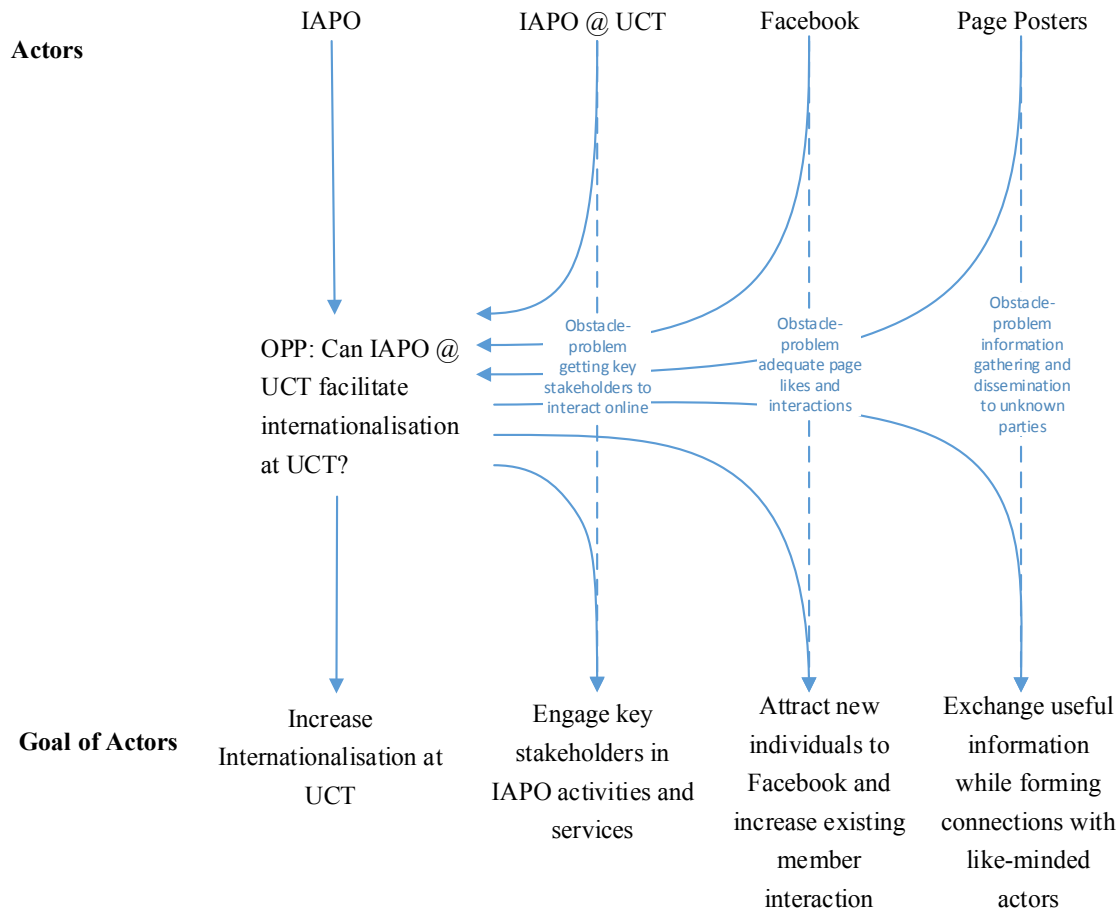


Figure 26: Problematisation of IAPO @ UCT

The IAPO actor is interested in increasing internationalisation at UCT by using a Facebook page, IAPO @ UCT. The OPP for this focal actor is whether or not IAPO can facilitate internationalisation at UCT through the Facebook Page, IAPO @ UCT. The purpose of the IAPO @ UCT Page is to engage key stakeholders in IAPO activities and services so that the main stakeholders can interact with each other as well as with IAPO in the online virtual community. The obstacle to reaching this goal is getting enough of the stakeholders to engage with each other on IAPO @ UCT. The Facebook application intends to attract members, who are not already on Facebook, to join Facebook as well as increase member interaction on Facebook in order to keep existing members on the SNS. The page posters have the goal of exchanging useful information about IAPO and UCT as well as forming linkages with other like-minded actors. The obstacle in achieving the page posters' goal would be how to exchange information and make linkages with

actors they do not necessarily know yet. The actors that comprise the page posters may want to interact across groupings and not necessarily know how to go about it i.e. SSA students may want to interact with SA students but they may not know how to make contact with the SA students.

7.4.3 Interesement

IAPO aimed to achieve Interesement by making the other actors behave as set out in the Problematisation in Figure 26. IAPO set up the IAPO @ UCT Page to facilitate internationalisation at UCT by providing an environment for their key stakeholders to interact with each other online, allowing possible offline interaction and other chances for the local and international page posters to interact and learn more about each other's cultures and lifestyles. Seven IAPO staff members were made administrators on IAPO @ UCT so that they could set up the Page. In order to get individuals to Like IAPO @ UCT, the page administrator actors had to invite existing Facebook friends to Like the page in order to start the online interaction. The page administrator actors invited all parties who they thought would be interested in Liking the Page. In other words, they were the ones who convinced other actors to join the IAPO @ UCT Page through individual invitations to IAPO @ UCT. At that stage, they were acting in their capacity as IAPO staff members or the IAPO actor. From then on, IAPO @ UCT was able to convince and entice page posters by providing relevant content for them to Like, Comment or Share. The interests of the IAPO @ UCT actor are revealed by the categories of posts made on the IAPO @ UCT Page i.e.:

IAPO @ UCT is used to identify key stakeholders as potential page posters:

“please remember that all international, SADC, SSA, local and future students are welcome to join... in fact anyone who is interested in IAPO or UCT So please invite all your friends who would like to participate! Tx” – IAPO @ UCT, post 1.5

The IAPO @ UCT actor informed the other actors that the page was set up to share information about studying at the university and for exchange opportunities.

“Please invite your friends to join this page for information about studying at UCT as well as exchanges from UCT to other universities!” – Post 1.8, IAPO @ UCT

In order to make the actors accept IAPO and its role of facilitating internationalisation at UCT, allies like IAPO @ UCT and Facebook were used directly to attract page posters. IAPO @ UCT was “controlled” by IAPO which dictated what was posted by the page administrators who had the power to hide inappropriate posts or Comments on the page made by the page posters. The page posters themselves could also act as allies, attracting more page posters to the SNS when they interacted in a positive way on the SNS. An example of this type of positive interaction is found in the following quote:

“[Staff member’s name] @ IAPO is just the best. Since my first couple of weeks in UCT as a green horn, she has done her best to make life easier and fun...” extract from Post 2.99 Poster 365

The more useful the content that IAPO, Facebook or the page posters are able to post on IAPO @ UCT, the more interactions on IAPO @ UCT. Facebook aided IAPO in attracting page posters to IAPO @ UCT by providing ways for increasing the interactions on IAPO @ UCT. Facebook did this in many ways, such as:

- Providing a free service where participants can be emailed, informing them of the IAPO @ UCT page.
- Providing a “page advertising” service that IAPO could use to attract more page Likes and to promote certain posts and thus gain more Likes, Comments and Shares.
- Posting a percentage of the IAPO @ UCT Page posts on the timelines of page posters who have Liked IAPO @ UCT.
- Posting the number of page likers and other pages that IAPO @ UCT Likes on the IAPO @ UCT timeline.
- Providing the option to hide inappropriate posts or Comments on IAPO @ UCT.

Actors who may have been a threat to IAPO's goal of increasing internationalisation at UCT could be some of the page posters. One original post was a complaint. The poster stated:

"its been weeks since I mailed and I have heard nothing!!" – Post 2.104,
Poster 396

IAPO @ UCT did not respond to or delete this post which could have negatively affected the credibility of IAPO. IAPO was, therefore, able to control positive outcomes on IAPO @ UCT by making sure that all page interactions align with its goal of increasing internationalisation at UCT; however, IAPO needed to make sure that all negative interactions were either hidden or positively responded to. Incidentally, this post occurred after a string of compliments on IAPO @ UCT. The post was eventually addressed on the Page, but after the timeframe for the case study.

The IAPO @ UCT Page achieved Intersement as the actors behaved in the manner set out in the Problematisation. IAPO @ UCT tried to increase internationalisation at UCT by setting up the Facebook Page. IAPO @ UCT posted information on IAPO activities and services which engaged key stakeholders online. Facebook attracted page posters who wrote original posts and/or Liked, Commented or Shared posts on IAPO @ UCT. These page posters, in turn, attracted further page posters who interacted on IAPO @ UCT because of the interaction of previous page posters.

In order to see how these actors worked together towards the goal of increasing internationalisation at UCT, a post from the IAPO @ UCT Page was extracted to illustrate the interaction on IAPO @ UCT towards internationalisation and Intersement. Figure 27 shows UCT students who are leaders on the Student Representative Council (SRC). One of the students in the photograph is a page poster. He was tagged in the photograph and the photograph has been geographically tagged on UCT Upper Campus. This photo was taken at a UCT event that the SRC and IAPO organised; it appeared in an IAPO photo album on the IAPO @ UCT Page named "Africa Month International Student Comm Plaza Event 2012".

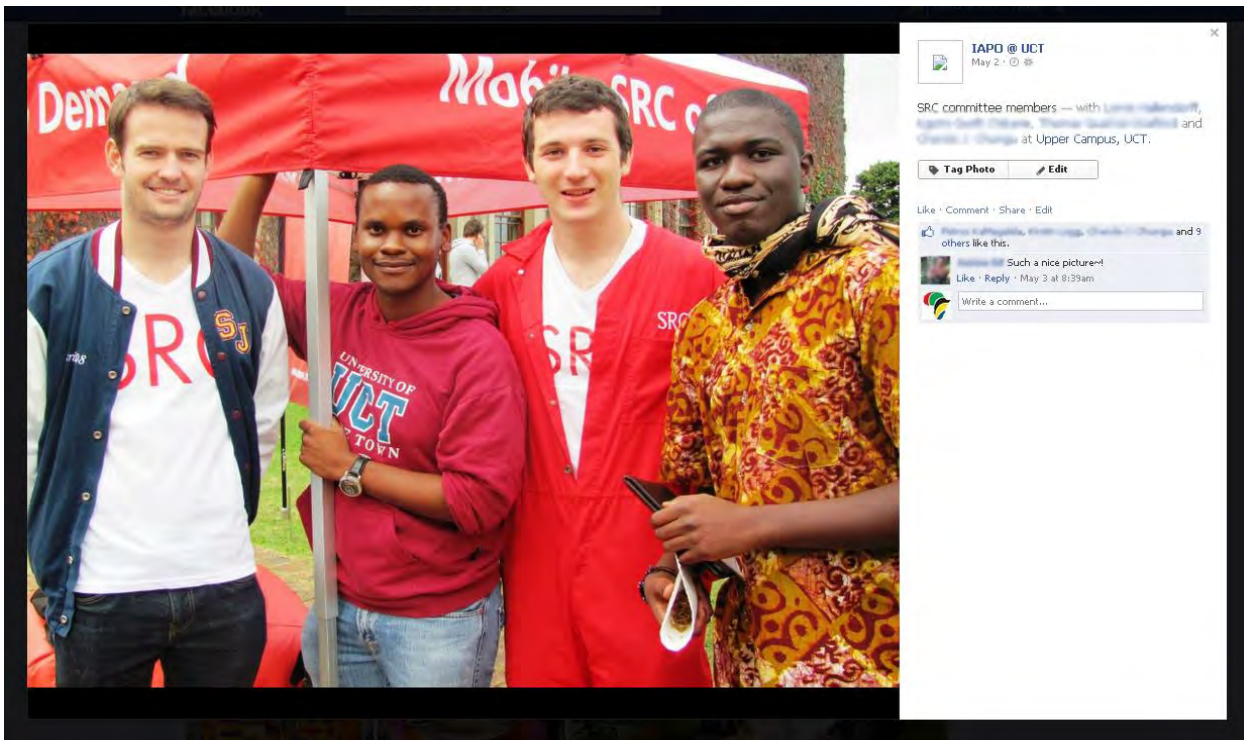


Figure 27: UCT Student SRC Members

In Figure 27, the different actors were working together to increase internationalisation at UCT. The IAPO actor liaised with the SRC actor to host an event. The IAPO actor took photographs of this event and posted the photographs on IAPO @ UCT. SRC leaders were tagged in the photographs that they appeared in. One of the SRC members was a page poster (poster 78). He wore African clothing at the event that showcased African cuisine. All this was done by means of the Facebook actor who provided the platform for the online interaction as well as the tools to post the photograph, tag the students and allow a page poster to Like and Comment on the photograph. The photograph is available on the IAPO @ UCT Page for all Facebook members to see, especially those who Liked the IAPO @ UCT Page and whose news feed the post would appear on.

7.4.4 Enrolment

If Interesement was successful, enrolment would have occurred. Enrolment involves the convergence of the roles of all the actors. IAPO set out to enrol the actors so that their interests would align with IAPO's goal of internationalisation at UCT.

The IAPO @ UCT actor was enrolled without resistance. IAPO appointed the seven page administrators from its staff, ensuring the alignment of IAPO @ UCT with its goal of increasing internationalisation at UCT. Facebook was enrolled when it was chosen to host the online environment IAPO @ UCT. Facebook algorithms do, however, control the percentage of posts that are seen by the page likers. In 2013, there was more than 40% decline in the organic (non-paid) reach of Facebook pages due to the Facebook algorithm (Tobin, 2013; Lafferty, 2013). However, Facebook still posts a percentage of the IAPO @ UCT posts on the news feeds of page likers and is, therefore, enrolled in the goal of increasing internationalisation at UCT.

At first, the page posters were sceptical of IAPO @ UCT as a Facebook page. One page poster, an IFD student, stated on 10 March 2010:

“so iapo is on the BOOK lol I dunno what to think of dat lol” – Poster 30,
Post 2.9

However, enrolment for a service office like IAPO was not difficult for other page posters. An IFD student posted on IAPO @ UCT, less than two months after the page went live, to query when the medical aid cards would be available for collection. When students, in particular, needed information from IAPO, they accepted the IAPO @ UCT actor would be an available source to obtain this information although many of them admitted to using other channels of communication in addition to IAPO @ UCT, possibly to increase their likelihood of a response. Therefore, enrolment of page posters relied on the perceived benefit that they were able to get from the Page, either in the form of information received from the Page, responses to their Page interactions or the interactions that they were able to make with other page posters on- or offline. Perhaps the actors also expected the Page to behave in a similar fashion to other Pages and Profiles on Facebook because they were used to interacting on Facebook and using it as a source of information. It could even be that, once they saw their friends interacting on the Page, they were more likely to engage with the Page. This is speculation that warrants further, preferably quantitative, analysis. Since there was information exchange on the IAPO @ UCT Page and page posters continued to interact on the Page, enrolment seemed to have been successful for the page posters.

7.4.5 Mobilization

Mobilization occurs when actors, who were not previously mobile, are rendered mobile (encourage to interact with each other) by the focal actor (Callon, 1986). IAPO created an online space for the stakeholders of IAPO to interact. IAPO, IAPO @ UCT, Facebook and the page posters were given a space in which to congregate together online. IAPO and Facebook did not have a formal linkage before IAPO @ UCT was created. There was a UCT Facebook Page that had mentioned IAPO and some of its services but only as part of the many faculties and departments that were represented on the one page (University of Cape Town, 2013).

International students, consisting of less than 20% of the student population in 2012, would not have had the majority of posts targeted at them. International students would have been posted more general information about UCT, not necessarily addressing their particular needs (University of Cape Town, 2013). The UCT Facebook Page also did not allow original posts on the timeline. The IAPO @ UCT Page was created to address the problem of creating a dialogue between IAPO and their stakeholders in an online environment that would be easily accessible to the stakeholders, especially the international students and the SA students who would like to go on international exchanges and/or who could make connections with the international students.

The page posters were the spokespeople for the different types of stakeholders that IAPO needed to increase internationalisation at UCT. These stakeholders included applicants to UCT, SA students, SSA students, IFD students, IAPO staff members, and partners of IAPO and UCT. Page posters were from all of these diverse groupings of stakeholders. The key stakeholders were identified as international students (IFD and SSA students) and SA students. It was interesting to note that there were appropriate spokespeople for the SA and the international students. Two leaders of the Student Representative Council (SRC) 2012/2013, as posters 78 and 178, were active posters on IAPO @ UCT. Poster 78 was an international student who made three original posts, six Likes and two Comments while Poster 178 was a SA student who made seven original posts, three Likes, two Comments and two Shares.

Actors who were not mobile and unable to interact adequately, either offline or on other online platforms, were made mobile by allowing them to interact on the online environment, IAPO @

UCT. It became easier for IAPO to advance internationalisation because the Page was used as a tool to get their stakeholders onto the same online space where they were able to interact with each other in real time.

From the initial Problematisation to Interesement to Enrolment and to this final stage of Mobility, Translation occurred on the Actor Network. The actors were able to align their interests to promote internationalisation at UCT, whether they knew that they were doing it or not. Indeed, many of the page posters may not have been aware that their interactions online were teaching other page posters about UCT, IAPO, where they came from or who they connected with. Through their exchanges online, they left a cultural footprint about where they came from and the ability to add to the diverse and rich culture of UCT.

7.4.6 Irreversibility

Did IAPO create an online environment that would be missed if it were deactivated? Did the creation of IAPO @ UCT make it indispensable to IAPO? It is difficult to say with certainty that the removal of IAPO @ UCT would damage IAPO's internationalisation efforts at UCT, and to what extent the damage may be. However, it is clear that interactions on the page would cease to exist if IAPO @ UCT itself was deactivated. The page posters would have lost their platform, online voice and connection to each other unless these connections were already solidified offline or on another SNS in their individual capacities. Diverse page posters could meet at UCT, or through IAPO, offline or on the online UCT page but it has already been established that the current interaction at UCT was not adequate to allow cross-cultural exchange. Students leaving UCT would also have to connect via their personal SNS accounts in order to remain in contact or through other more traditional means. IAPO would lose its presence on Facebook without its own page. Facebook would continue to promote other pages and would not miss one page of 888 members but IAPO @ UCT would cease to exist as an actor.

A critical mass of contributors, however, could outweigh benefits as opposed to costs, which would indicate that the IAPO at UCT page was at a stage of irreversibility. A critical mass would be made from a certain number of members in a population in order to make the virtual

community meaningful (Crossley & Ibrahim, 2012). In order to see if there was a critical mass, the users of the innovation need to be compared to the overall population over time. According to Markus (1987), a few members within a population will start to make large contributions to the innovation while the majority do nothing. The contributors will then increase, at first at a steady rate and, then, either become an accelerating or decelerating production function. In the decelerating production function, early contributions from the few members will have the largest impact on the overall community, but this contribution would peter out as a proportion of contributors in the population diminishes over time. An accelerating production function would see the early contributors spark the contribution of more and more contributors over time (Markus, 1987). To apply this theory to IAPO @ UCT, the overall population of the IAPO stakeholders would have to be compared to the contributors on the IAPO @ UCT page. Even considering only the international student population of UCT in 2012 (4892), 888 likes would only be 18% of the overall population. If all the other IAPO stakeholders were included in the total population, this percentage would be even smaller. In addition, Figure 22 shows a steady increase in page Likes which could indicate that the take-up of the Page could either accelerate or decelerate from this stage onwards. If the contributions were measured against page posters (through distinct Likes, Comments, Shares and original posts), there would be a total of 395 contributors. Therefore, more time would be needed to see if the IAPO @ UCT Page would reach a critical mass.

An indication that the IAPO @ UCT Page may have achieved irreversibility lies in the staffing of IAPO. In a strategic workshop in 2011, IAPO decided that a Marketing Officer was needed in the staff component. An IAPO staff member with the Marketing portfolio was employed at the end of 2012. Part of her job description included the management of IAPO social media which was not present in the job descriptions of any of the IAPO staff before this time. This could be an indication that the value of SNS inclusion in IAPO was ratified by the rest of the IAPO staff members at the workshop.

With or without IAPO @ UCT, IAPO would still pursue internationalisation with students seeking other channels to interact with each other (although with more difficulty and with less

success) but it would not be the end of internationalisation at UCT. However, since the OPP was to increase internationalisation at UCT, the removal of IAPO @ UCT would hinder IAPO's progress and might result in the decrease of the university's internationalisation efforts.

7.5 Other Theories Addressing the Research Questions

7.5.1 Networking Theory

IAPO @ UCT is a scale-free network of individuals who interact on the online Facebook community. There were many poorly connected nodes of individuals and a few supernodes/hubs who were responsible for disseminating large amounts of information throughout the network to the other nodes. It would, therefore, be interesting to see which of the individuals on the network could be classified as the nodes and supernodes within the IAPO @ UCT network to identify which allies are capable of spreading information on behalf of IAPO in its attempt to increase internationalisation at UCT.

7.5.1.1 Nodes

To identify the nodes, the black box of page poster was opened to see what actors it was comprised of. These actors were present on IAPO @ UCT and accounted for all the interactions made on the page. From the of actors previously outlined in Table 7, the following types of nodes were identified:

- UCT Students
- IAPO Staff
- UCT Staff
- Applicant
- Applicant's Parent
- Partner
- Pages
- Alumni
- Friend

- General Public
- Unknown

7.5.1.2 Supernodes/Hubs

To assess which nodes were supernodes, their posting activity on IAPO @ UCT was investigated. The original posts, Likes, Comments and Shares were added together to see who the main contributors were. IAPO @ UCT, the Page itself, was not analysed because it was not classified as a page poster and it would be expected that the actual page would be responsible for the majority of the interactions (since all the interactions are occurring on the Page).

Influencers in modern media, where the population is ready to adopt using the media, are contributors who have interpersonal relationships on the network. These opinion leaders are usually respected members of the community who are linked to other members and are informed about topics that interest the community. Influencers are usually in the top 10% of the contributors on social media (Cha, Haddadi, Benevenuto, & Gummadi, 2010). In order to ascertain the influencers, the top 10% of the page posters were assessed as possible supernodes/hubs on IAPO @ UCT.

The top 10 % of contributors were identified; they were the top 40 post contributors on the page (out of 394 page posters). Since some of these page posters were assigned two roles, both roles were added together as it would not be clear in which role the page poster was acting. The largest influencers were 19 page posters with the IFD role; the second largest was IAPO consisting of 10 influencers. There were five SAS, four SSA students, three unknown contributors, two SRC leaders and one each Friend, Page and Partner who were also influential on the Page. A graphical representation of the influential page posters is presented in Figure 28.

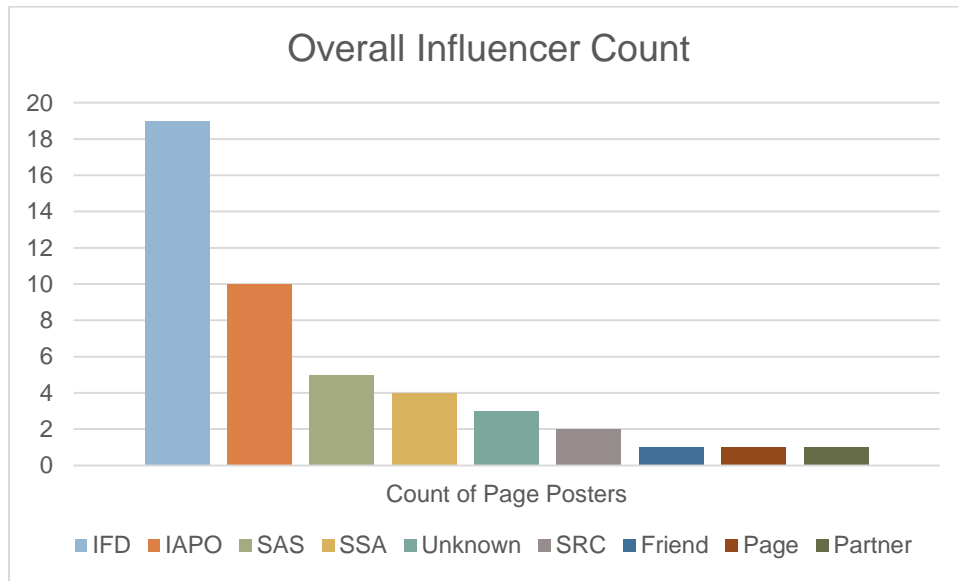


Figure 28: Overall Page Poster Influencers

The top IAPO staff contributor experienced identity confusion when posting on the page. She was one of the IAPO @ UCT page administrators and she sometimes posted as herself instead of as IAPO @ UCT. This may have skewed her participation, however, since she was only one of ten IAPO staff members as top influencers on the Page; IAPO staff members were still considered supernodes/hubs for disseminating information.

It could be argued that posting types are not equal. Analysis of different types of posting i.e. original posting may be more influential than Liking, and Commenting may be less influential than Sharing. A hierarchy of posting types may bring different supernodes to light. The posting hierarchy in Table 8 is proposed.

Table 8: Proposed Poster Hierarchy

Posting Type	Analysis of Impact
1. Share	Sharing a post makes the full post visible to the friends of the poster on the news feed and on the Timeline of the poster. This may indicate the desire of the poster to make Facebook Friends or Followers aware of the post, thus expressing a public opinion about the post. This may also encourage the Friends or Followers to Like the page.
2. Original Post	The poster is compelled enough to write on the page of the poster's own accord. This may or may not be in response of an existing post. This may indicate engagement with the page and would be visible to the likers of the Page. The post does not appear on the timeline of individual or their individual newsfeed but it is visible on the Facebook Ticker of their Friends or Followers. Depending on the Page settings, the post may be visible in a box at the top of the page (as was the case for IAPO @ UCT). The post will be visible on the page timeline filer "Posts by Others".
3. Comment	Commenting on a post indicates that the poster has something to add to the post. This may be because the poster has engaged with the post content considerably enough to form an opinion and has generated the desire to communicate that opinion. The comment is visible underneath the post.
4. Like	Liking a post creates the impression that the poster has endorsed the post.

The reason that Shares were ranked at the top of the hierarchy in Table 8 was because IAPO @ UCT's goal was to get key stakeholders to interact online. With 888 Likes at the end of a two and a half year period, a priority of the page would be to grow its likers by attracting new stakeholders to participate on the Facebook Page. Page posters Sharing to their Friends/Followers may attract other suitable stakeholders. The reason that original posts were listed as second in the hierarchy was because the original posts indicates the desire of the poster to start a conversation with the Page as opposed to reacting to existing content. Comments were listed above Likes because Comments indicate some original remarks from the poster whereas a Like merely endorse a post.

Using the proposed hierarchy in Table 8, all the posters were ordered (from largest to smallest) firstly by Share, secondly by original post, thirdly by Comment and fourthly by Like. The top 10% page posters by roles (one and two) that appeared according to this hierarchy are represented in Figure 29.

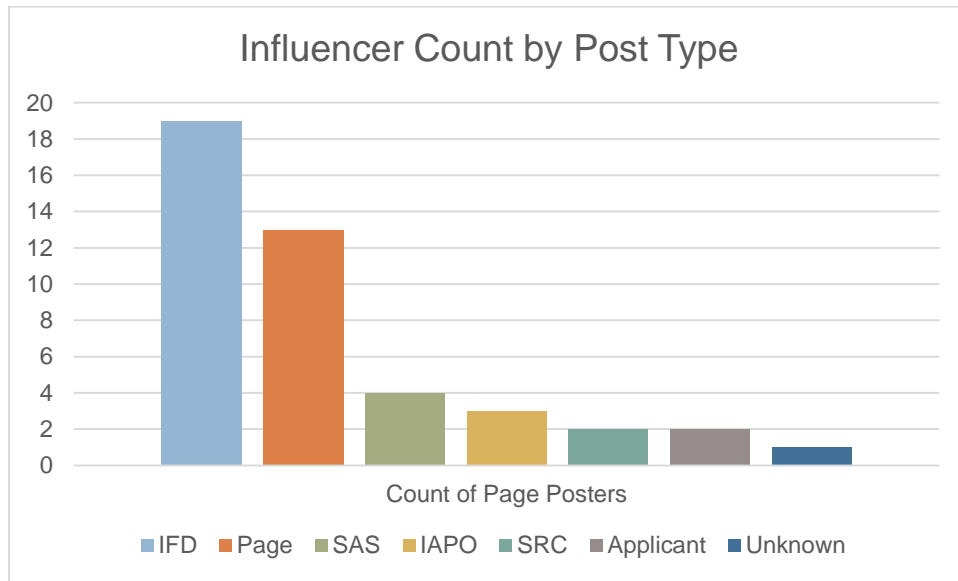


Figure 29: Page Poster Influencers Ranked by Post Type

Figure 29 indicates the top 10% of page posters by their role. IFD is the top contributing with 19 page posters acting in this capacity. Pages was the second highest with 13 page posters. IAPO followed with 3 posters, SRC and Applicants with two and Unknown contributors with one.

Taking into account the overall page poster roles that fell into both categories of overall influencers and influencers ranked according to Shares, original posts, Comments and Likes, the following page poster roles are suggested as supernodes/hubs on IAPO @ UCT:

- IFD
- IAPO Staff
- SAS
- SSA
- SRC
- Applicant

Unknown roles were excluded from being supernodes/hubs as their unknown status does not add any value to the type of supernodes/hubs are on the Page. Partner and Friend were excluded as supernodes/hubs because only one partner and one friend were significant page posters when the

posters were ranked by overall posts and not when the page posters were ranked in order of post type.

To illustrate one of the posts of a supernode/hub posters who was a SA students as well as a SRC leader, Post 2.56 is shown in Figure 30. This post illustrated engagement from a unique commenter (who started to engage in a public dialogue with the supernode/hub on the IAPO @ UCT Page) and 6 likers.



Figure 30: Post 2.56, Supernode/Hub Poster 178

7.5.2 Social Capital

The IAPO @ UCT Facebook Page tried to increase the social capital of the online community by rewarding favourable action. This involved Liking original posts and responding to original posts and Comments made on the Page. An example of IAPO @ UCT rewarding favourable action is shown in Figure 31.



Figure 31: Post 2.53, Poster 387

IAPO @ UCT set out to constrain negative actions on the Page by hiding inappropriate Comments and deleting inappropriate original posts. An example of a hidden post is given in Figure 32. This comment was not visible to page posters but page administrators were able to see the Comment 'greyed out' to indicate that it was hidden. Page administrators still had the option to unhide the Comment if it was hidden in error, although this was not the case for Post 1.272. The housing database did, in fact, exist at IAPO at the time that the post was published. Showing this Comment to the likers of IAPO @ UCT may cause them to doubt the trustworthiness of IAPO @ UCT. Unfortunately, if the likers had already seen the Comment and then noticed that it was not there anymore, this may also cause them to question why the post was hidden instead of replied to by IAPO @ UCT. In addition, hiding the Commenter's post (if they noticed that the post was subsequently hidden) could cause the Commenter not to interact on the page in the future. This page poster (227), incidentally, did not visibly interact on the Page before or after this hidden Comment. The IAPO @ UCT page administrators needed to decide if it was better to possibly lose a page poster and the confidence of page likers if they were to hide posts in the future. This could affect the trustworthiness of IAPO @ UCT.



Figure 32: A hidden comment on IAPO @ UCT on Post 1.272.5

Certain individuals join a Facebook fan page only to post negative Comments on the page timeline. Most corporates have decided not to delete the negative Comments of page posters but rather to respond to the Comments in a positive way. This ensures that the page posters feel that their opinions are valued and that their concerns will be seriously addressed (Dekay, 2012). The seven IAPO Administrators used their personal discretion when choosing whether to hide a negative Comment or reply to a negative Comment, however, the full extent of their actions should inform their decision about to react to future posts.

Building trustworthiness in an online environment involves building a relationship with the page posters. One way that IAPO @ UCT attempted to build relationships was to react positively to page posts such as the one in Figure 31. By engaging with the content and encouraging the page poster to post again, the page poster felt comfortable that his posts were welcome and did post again. Conversely, hiding Comment 1.272.5 in Figure 32 may have been the reason that Poster 227 did not choose to visibly interact on IAPO @ UCT again.

By setting up the IAPO @ UCT Page, IAPO created obligations and expectations. Once IAPO started to use IAPO @ UCT to post information relevant to their stakeholders, the page posters started to expect certain information on IAPO @ UCT. The types of information that they were seeking were mainly about administrative procedures and job seeking but, as they came to the Page in search of information (or when the Page posts appeared on the page poster's timeline or Ticker), they were also exposed to other information that they did not necessarily know about IAPO. An example of this exposure is illustrated in Figure 33. IAPO @ UCT was, therefore, able to steer the page posters into being exposed to certain information that promoted their internationalisation at UCT.



Figure 33: Post 1.266 on IAPO @ UCT

There were examples of closure as well as of intergenerational closure on IAPO @ UCT. An illustration of closure is shown in Figure 34. An original poster had asked a question on IAPO @ UCT and the Page did not answer her question. Two other page posters, who have the same issue as the original page poster, asked the page poster if she was successful in resolving her query so that she could assist them with the same problem. Fortunately, IAPO was able to answer her emails and she learned how to resolve her problem. She then private messaged the other posters on their private Facebook accounts with the answer to their problems. This indicates closure because the two Commenters (who are peers of the original page poster) trusted the original page poster to send them correct information to their personal Facebook accounts. These peers may or may not have been Facebook Friends of the original page poster. Looking at the way that the Commenters addressed the original page poster, it seems likely she was not an existing Friend. Therefore the commenters may have relied on a stranger to assist them with a payment problem because they felt that the IAPO @ UCT Page was a safe space in which to interact on.



Figure 34: Closure on Post 2.43

An example of intergenerational closure is illustrated using Figure 32 again. Post 1.272 illustrates intergenerational closure because the page administrators were able to sanction the negative post on IAPO @ UCT so that the other page posters, who had not already seen the post, would not have a negative impression of IAPO that was untrue. Because the post was written as a visible Comment on a page post, IAPO @ UCT page administrators were able to hide the post as opposed to a post that could have been written on an individual's personal profile or on any other SNS where IAPO was not a member. IAPO @ UCT, therefore, supports the closure of the network. If a page poster performs negative actions towards another page poster, the offending page poster could be warned and/or banned from interacting on the Page in the future. Therefore, IAPO @ UCT can use the tools available on Facebook to maintain closure and trustworthiness on the online community.

IAPO @ UCT was able to provide international students with a social support system in the form of events that students could attend to meet each other. After the events, IAPO @ UCT would often post albums containing pictures taken at the event and would encourage page posters to tag themselves in the pictures. Page administrators, who were Friends of other IAPO stakeholders with their personal Facebook accounts, tagged their Friends in the pictures to kick start page tagging. This was a successful way to make stakeholders aware of the kinds of events that IAPO and UCT host as well as making stakeholders aware of the cultures and different languages of the international students. A good example of this type of interaction is present in Figure 35.



Figure 35: Post 1.114 with Tagged Page Poster, a Like and Comments

One of the IFD students is tagged in this photograph where his cultural food is on display as well as the logo of his society at UCT, while a female IFD student is in cultural dress. The Comments on this post are in two different languages.

7.5.3 Social Identity and Presence

There were examples of page posters who openly identified IAPO with the IAPO @ UCT Page. One of the SA students, who was also working as a temporary assistant at IAPO, mentioned IAPO @ UCT in an original post as her workplace. This is shown in Figure 36. She, therefore, identified IAPO @ UCT as being the same as the physical IAPO as well as relating to IAPO @ UCT with some fondness and being a part of IAPO @ UCT. Several permanent staff members included IAPO @ UCT (as a place in Facebook) as the place that they worked on their personal Facebook profiles. They, therefore, identified themselves as a part of IAPO @ UCT because of their ‘membership’ in IAPO.



Figure 36: Identification with IAPO @ UCT – Post 2.31, Poster

After the Africa Month plaza event in 2013 where free African cuisine was available, there was an outpouring of compliments to IAPO. These Comments are represented in Figure 37. One commenter referred to IAPO and the other to IAPO @ UCT as one of the organisers of the event. This may indicate that events that showcase different cultures (especially when there are a significant number of students from the countries represented) and are affiliated with IAPO in some way have a positive bearing on the profile of IAPO. However, the students Commenting on this event did not identify themselves as part of IAPO or IAPO @ UCT. It seems as if only the permanent staff members, and some students who worked at IAPO part time, felt part of IAPO and IAPO @ UCT. This is something that could be addressed by IAPO through their branding but also to be more inclusive of the student stakeholders in planning events so that they can identify themselves as a part of IAPO @ UCT.



Figure 37: Compliments after an Event in Album Post 1.298

There was a degree of identity confusion on IAPO @ UCT. The researcher was often asked whether or not Page members would see the posts that page administrators made i.e. if the posts would show their personal Facebook profile or details. One potential page administrator did not understand why she needed a personal Facebook account if she just wanted to write posts for the Page. She ended up not joining Facebook at all. Some of the existing page administrators were confused as to how they could log into Facebook as themselves and then switch to the Page without logging in as the Page. They also were not sure when they were logged in as the Page or themselves. The researcher advised them to check the profile picture on the top right-hand section of the Facebook header but this did not stop one of the page administrators (159) from consistently posting from her personal Facebook profile when she intended to post as IAPO @ UCT. An example of this identity confusion is given in Figure 38. Post 2.84. In this example, IAPO ran a campaign to increase the visibility of the services that they offer. The campaign was supposed to feature a captioned photograph every week day on the IAPO @ UCT Page, with IAPO @ UCT as the poster. Poster 159 continued to alternate between posting as herself or the Page despite the researcher making her aware of the posts coming from her personal account. This may illustrate the confusion that page administrators felt about using Facebook as a page for work and using Facebook for personal reasons.



Figure 38: Identity Confusion on IAPO @ UCT, Post 2.84, Poster 159

Social presence was displayed on IAPO @ UCT in a manner of ways. Allowing individuals to post directly on the page and Like, Comment and Share posts increased the visibility of these individuals because their names and, in the case of the original posts and Shares, their profile pictures would show next to their interactions. Individuals could also choose to filter the Page timeline to show “posts from others” thus showing all original posts and excluding the IAPO @ UCT posts. A page poster’s presence could therefore be seen by individuals visiting the Page. The frequency and volume of recent posts may also have encouraged individuals to interact on the Page.

The photo albums, especially those after an offline event, also gave a face to IAPO and the UCT community. IAPO stakeholders present at the events, who had their photos posted on the Page, obtained a presence on the IAPO @ UCT Page. In addition, page posters who *checked-into* IAPO @ UCT or *tagged* IAPO @ UCT made their presence publically available on the Page and

on their personal profiles. This also encouraged stakeholders to continue to participate in IAPO events and made others want to start participating in IAPO events. Examples of the desire to participate in future events are shown in Figure 39 and Figure 40.



Figure 39: Post 1.345 Showing Posters Wanting to Participate in Future Events



Figure 40: Post 1.271, Page Poster Willing to Join Future Events

7.6 Response to the Research Questions

In order to respond to the rapidly changing landscape of internationalisation worldwide, IAPO set up an online community in which its key stakeholders could interact. The main research

question was: How could the use of a SNS facilitate internationalisation in a HEI? This question was further dissected into seven sub-questions, each using a theory to analyse and attempt to address the question.

7.6.1 Will the age and gender of the SNS virtual community members reflect the age and gender characteristics present within the HEI?

7.6.1.1 Gender

The ages and genders of the majority of page likers and page posters were not the same. Extracting the ages and genders of IAPO's main stakeholder, the international students, from PeopleSoft on 10 February 2014 (although this is not audited data as the 2013 data only receives a final audit late in 2014) indicated that gender for international students was slightly more male than female as indicated in Figure 41.

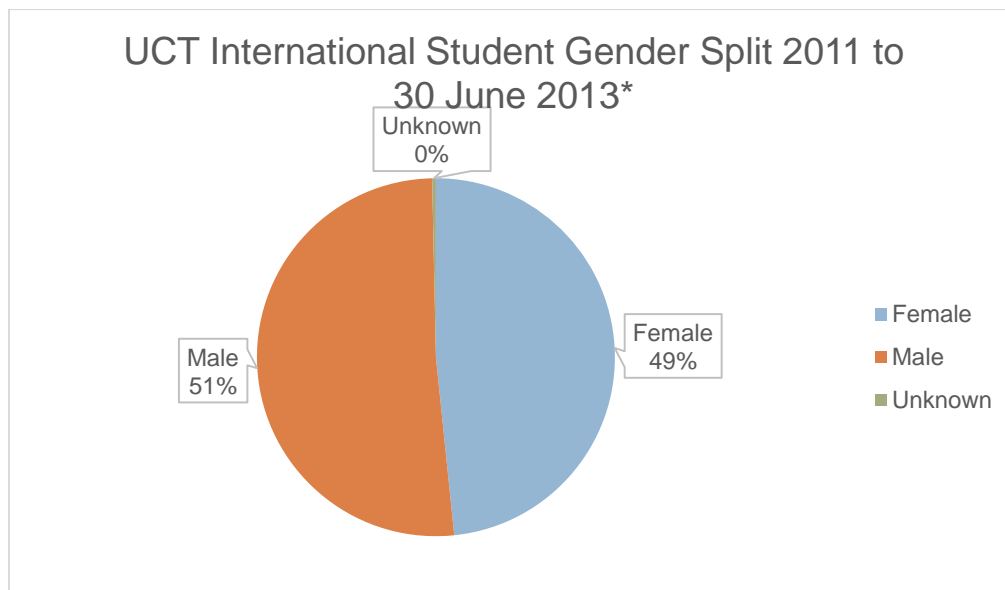


Figure 41: International Student Gender from 2011 – 30 June 2013 *Data not audited

The comparison of the overall gender split from 2011 to the end of June 2013 (which is not distinct as many students may have had recurring registrations from 2011 to 2013 but gives an average over the case study period) to the Facebook insights as well as the poster profiles is indicated in Table 9.

Table 9: Gender Comparison

Populations	Female	Male	Total (N)	Binomial P-Values	Statistically Significant? Yes p<0.05
UCT International Students 2011 – 30 June 2013	49%	51%	13119	N/A	N/A
Human Page Likes	91%	9%	888	0.000	Yes
Overall Human Page Posters (where gender was known)	55%	45%	362	0.022	Yes
Human Post Sharers (where gender was known)	43%	57%	14	0.696	No
Original Page Posters (where gender was known)	47%	53%	57	0.844	No
Post Commenter (where gender was known)	56%	44%	108	0.113	No
Post Liker (where gender was known)	56%	44%	270	0.030	Yes

The gender split between the IAPO main stakeholder and the Facebook insights as well as the various page posters differed. Although international students were not the only participants on the SNS, being the main IAPO stakeholder indicated that the gender distribution of students would be useful as an indicator of their portion of the IAPO stakeholder population. The international student population was similar, with 49% female and 51% male. There were more males (57% and 53%) who made more post types with further impact (e.g. sharing and posting original posts) although these posts were not significantly different to the female sharers and original posters as the Binomial P-values were not less than 0.05. Females (56%) were more likely to take the post types with less impact i.e. of comments and likes. The greater percentage (56%) of female as commenters was not significant. Female page and post likers were statistically significantly more than male page and post likers. Females were much more likely to Like the actual page (91%, $p=0.000$) as well as become post likers (56%, $p=0.030$).

Previous research has indicated that more male university students use Facebook than their female counterparts (Thompson & Lougheed, 2012). The large discrepancy between the genders of students who commit to Liking the Page therefore needs to be addressed.

7.6.1.2 Age

The age of UCT students was calculated from their date of birth to the date that their study permit details were captured. The age distribution from all international students at UCT from 1 January 2011 to 30 June 2013 is graphically depicted in Figure 42.

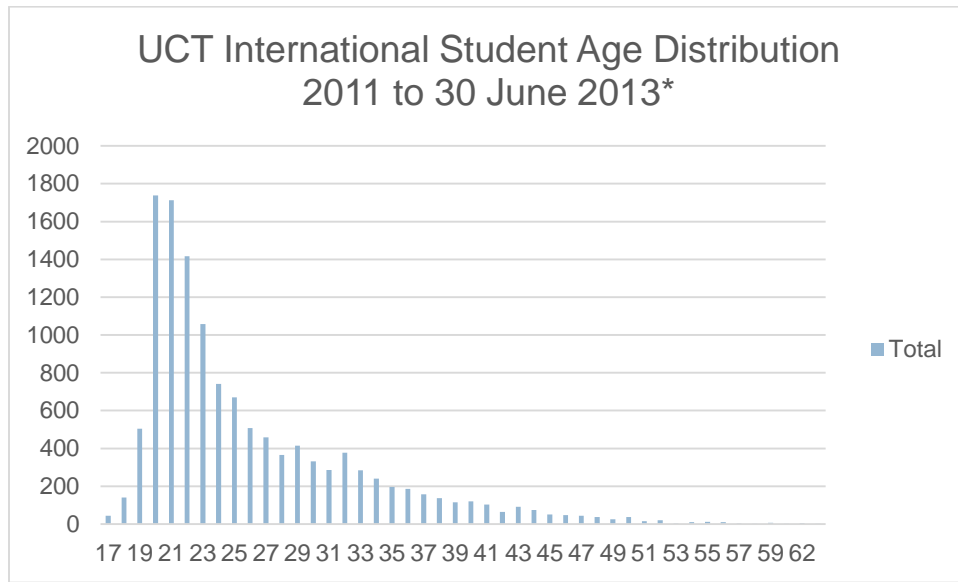


Figure 42: UCT International Student Age Distribution 2011 to 30 June 2013 *Provisional Data Only

Comparing the age distribution of all international students and the known age of the page posters (Figure 13) shows that there is a similar pattern of younger users. This aligns with research on social media that indicates that younger individuals are the main Facebook users (McAndrew & Jeong, 2012).

However, when comparing the age distribution of all international students to the Facebook Page insight likers, the bulk of the Facebook likers came from very different age groups. The main age groups were ages 55 and older (42%) and from age 13 to 17 (31%). Since the page insights do not show Facebook administrators who the individuals are who fall within these brackets, this unexpected age distribution would need further investigation.

7.6.2 How will actors interact in a SNS virtual community that has been set up by an administrative department in a HEI?

The theory employed to address this question was ANT. Using ANT analysis, it was revealed that IAPO was the focal actor who set up IAPO @ UCT in affiliation with the Facebook actor and the page poster actor. IAPO was able to steer the other actors toward its goal and OPP of increasing internationalisation at UCT. Although there was evidence of the facilitation of internationalisation at UCT, there was also some evidence to show that the deactivation of the Page would have an adverse effect on UCT's internationalisation efforts. The appointment of a Marketing Officer to manage the Facebook Page was instrumental in indicating that the Facebook Page has become a part of the administration of IAPO.

7.6.3 Which actors will become supernodes in the SNS virtual community that has been set up by an administrative department in a HEI?

The theory used to analyse this sub-question was Networking Theory. It was ascertained that the supernodes were IFD students, SAS, SSA students, SRC, IAPO Staff, Pages and Applicants as they were the page posters responsible for repeat interactions on the Page as well as influential posters.

7.6.4 How will the formation of weak ties bring new information into a SNS virtual community that was set up by an administrative department in a HEI?

The theory used to analyse this sub-question was Networking Theory. Facebook Friends of IAPO stakeholders were the weak ties that brought novel information into the network. These Friends were lured to IAPO @ UCT by posts made by Friends (or in which their Friends were tagged). These Friends interacted on the posts that their Friends were in and they brought different perspectives to the page. Weak ties were also formed between applicants who did not know each other. They worked together to get information that they required.

7.6.5 Can closure be created in a SNS virtual community that has been set up by an administrative department in a HEI?

The theory used to analyse this sub-question was the Theory of Social Capital. Closure as well as intergenerational closure was present on IAPO @ UCT. Applicants worked together to get an answer to their question because they trusted that their peers would provide them with the correct information. Intergenerational closure occurred when negative posts and Comments were deleted or hidden by IAPO @ UCT administrators. This ensured that negative behaviours on the network were sanctioned, thus de-incentivising individuals who want to make untrue comments from posting again.

7.6.6 Will actors in a SNS virtual community that has been set up by an administrative department in a HEI identify themselves as belonging to the virtual community?

The theory used to analyse this sub-question was the Theory of Social Identity. Although permanent and temporary staff identified themselves as a part of IAPO @ UCT, there was no evidence to suggest that any of the other stakeholders identified themselves as a part of IAPO or IAPO @ UCT. Stakeholders interchanged the identity of IAPO and IAPO @ UCT freely but always spoke about IAPO and IAPO @ UCT in the third person.

7.6.7 Will actors in a SNS virtual community that has been set up by an administrative department in a HEI notice and react to other actors present on the virtual community?

The theory used to analyse this sub-question was the Theory of Social Presence. There was evidence that offline events (and the photos that were posted after such events) had a positive effect on the presence of other stakeholders interacting on IAPO @ UCT. Social presence increased the desire of both students who had and who had not previously participated in IAPO events to participate in future IAPO events. This had the direct effect of increasing online interaction (expressing the desire to interact on the Page) as well as offline interaction (eventually attending an event and meeting other students).

In light of the responses to the sub-questions, the main question of “How could the use of a SNS facilitate internationalisation in a HEI?” can be answered. By setting up a virtual community on a SNS that key stakeholders are already active on, there was evidence that IAPO was able to increase the interaction of its key stakeholders. The increased awareness of the different cultures of the various stakeholders, in turn, was able to facilitate internationalisation at UCT.

7.6.8 How could the use of a SNS facilitate internationalisation in a HEI?

The sub questions discussed above were employed to address the main research question which is: How could the use of a SNS facilitate internationalisation in a HEI? Through the sub questions, the case study of IAPO @ UCT indicated that males were more likely to actively post on the page whereas females were more passive in their posting activity but were more likely to be page likers which means that they may have seen more of the page posts. Although international students at UCT tended mainly to be between 19 and 30, the main Facebook likers were 55 years and older or under 17 years old. This disparity could indicate that the page was not attracting the target stakeholders of IAPO @ UCT but could indicate other possible stakeholders that may have been overlooked (or possibly even the Parents of Applicants or the Applicants themselves - this would require further investigation in order to ascertain if these were the actual stakeholders or not).

Analysis of the IAPO @ UCT Facebook page indicated that there was interaction between the actors on the page and that the deactivation of the page would take away a channel of interaction that aids internationalisation at UCT. Supernodes, such as the IFD students, SAS, SSA students, SRC, IAPO Staff, other Facebook Pages as well as Applicants were the main disseminators of information on the page. Friends of stakeholders appeared to be the weak ties that were brought into the network. Through commenting on their friends’ posts, they brought novel information onto the page, sometimes information about their friends that was in a different context than the usual perceptions of their friends. Other weak ties came from the applicants who colluded into sourcing information about their UCT application.

Closure was maintained on the page by constraining negative or abusive comments as well as the display of trust that was built between applicants, who did not know each other, but trusted the application information that was shared. Only students who had worked at IAPO identified themselves as being a part of the page. More effort in branding or offline activity needs to be explored so that the main stakeholders can identify with the collective group of IAPO @ UCT. Offline interaction in events showed promise in increasing online interaction even if the online stakeholders were not present at the events. Through these page interactions, the researcher was able to see what possible stakeholders and actions could lead to increased interaction on the page. There was evidence, through the theories, that the actions of the stakeholders was facilitating internationalisation at UCT because the positive interaction between the stakeholders was demonstrated and explained using the various theories.

8 Discussion of Findings

The comparison of the Facebook Page insights and the Facebook post analysis conducted by the researcher highlighted the differences between the individuals who committed to Liking the Page and, therefore, following what the page was doing in their newsfeed, and those who sought out interactions on the Page when they chose to visit the Page on their own accord. In terms of overall numbers, there were 888 Likes on the Page as at 30 June 2013, and 372 individuals who were page posters (23 Pages and Institution Profiles). A page liker could, but did not have to, also be a page poster.

The differences between the genders of page likers and page posters was stark. Females were significantly much more likely to Like the page (91%) and Like posts (56%). More males posted original posts (53%) and Shared posts (57%) but this was not significantly more than female page posters. Using the poster hierarchy in Table 8, males used more influential post types thus spreading their interactions on IAPO @ UCT more than females who chose less influential post types. However, male sharing and original posting was not significantly higher than female sharing and posting indicating that there was not necessarily a gender bias in the more influential posting types. However, females were significantly more likely to Like the Page meaning that they were more likely to see future IAPO @ UCT posts on their news feeds. Females were more likely to Like posts as well, which is the least influential post type. Female posters could therefore be encouraged to use more influential post types.

The age difference between likers and page posters was equally vast. The age categories that made up the majority of page likers (73%) was 55 years and older (42%) and ages 13 to 17 (31%). If students are IAPO's main stakeholders, the majority would be expected to be 17 years and older (to enter tertiary education) and under 55 years i.e. more in line with the UCT international student age distribution in Figure 42. The page posters peaked between the early- to mid-twenties which would be more expected of the ages of the main stakeholders.

It seems as if the page likers and the target stakeholders are not the same. Although the Likes, Comments and Shares seem to represent the student population, the page Likes did not. In order to post to the target stakeholders, they need to be page likers as well to ensure that a percentage

of them will see the targeted posts. IAPO should aim to get more Likes on the Page that are relevant to the target stakeholders. IAPO could invest in “buying” Likes on the Page through Facebook advertising and targeting the ages between 17 and 30 (the gap in page Like ages, the ages of the main page posters and the peak of the age range for international students).

The Facebook insights rated page likers by IP address whereas the researcher gathered this information from individual Facebook profiles and PeopleSoft data; therefore, the two datasets were not directly comparable. However, the page likers who were not in South Africa could be an indication of possible partners, applicants or alumni. Getting more applicants into the university may increase university revenue if they are accepted. Connecting with alumni could increase further study or donation opportunities, and partnerships could increase linkages with other institutions. Even if the individuals were not alumni, partners or potential applicants, it was interesting to see that the biggest groupings of foreign page likers are situated in the United States (where the majority of SSA students are from), Germany, India (a BRICS country), Zimbabwe (part of the Afropolitan agenda), and Nigeria (part of the Afropolitan agenda).

The citizenship of the page Posters, when assessed, indicated that South Africans were the biggest contributors. This was reassuring because, as a department that deals with international students, IAPO needs South African stakeholders to make the students feel welcome on the UCT campus. Page posters from the United States ranked second in the number of page posts. This was not surprising as students from the United States form the majority of SSA students and are known to be vocal about their needs compared to other UCT students. African citizens from Zimbabwe, the DRC, Kenya and Nigeria have been contributing successfully on IAPO @ UCT which may indicate the success of the Afropolitan angle to internationalisation that UCT, and IAPO, has been pursuing. Germany, once again, was highlighted as a high ranking contributor.

The different roles that the page posters acted in were useful in highlighting which IAPO stakeholders were comfortable in interacting on the IAPO @ UCT Page. IFD students were the largest contributors with 121 posts. As they form the largest part of the international student body, it was a good sign that one of IAPO’s main stakeholders was active on the Page. SA Students were the second group of contributors by role, and, to reiterate, it was a good sign that

SA students were interacting with the international students online. A surprising group of contributors was the Friends of IAPO stakeholders. Although this is the hallmark of Facebook (allowing Friends of Friends certain visibility), it is interesting to see that unintended stakeholders were interacting on the Page. A group that could have been more active on the Page were the SSA students who only made 20 interactions. Most SSA students are only at UCT for one semester which does not give them a lot of time to interact with other students. Through the use of IAPO @ UCT, they could make connections with SA students and other international students. Therefore, the interaction of SSA students on IAPO @ UCT needs to be encouraged and grown. SRC leaders, although small in numbers (2), had a large impact in the posts. SRC leaders should be encouraged to continue their interactions on IAPO @ UCT in order to make the international students a part of the UCT campus community.

The different theoretical frameworks painted a picture of what occurred when the IAPO @ UCT Page was set up to facilitate internationalisation at UCT. Using ANT as a lens allowed the actors involved in the facilitation of internationalisation at UCT, through the online platform of Facebook pages, to come to light. ANT enabled the researcher to identify, from a high level view, the goals of the different actors, as well as the obstacles in achieving their goals.

IAPO set on a path to encourage the actors into aligning with its goal of increasing internationalisation at UCT from Problematisation to Mobilization. There was an increase of internationalisation at UCT, through the interaction and cultural showcasing on the IAPO @ UCT Page. In addition, there was an indication that giving IAPO @ UCT more time to grow might allow the virtual community to accelerate and create a critical mass of users. Although internationalisation might be diminished without the IAPO @ UCT Page, it would not cease to exist if the Page was deactivated; however, the Page is an important actor in the facilitation of increasing internationalisation at UCT.

Treating groups of actors as black boxes was beneficial in showcasing their similarities. Using the page posters as an example, it was clear to see that they mainly requested the exchange of information. Opening the black boxes showed how different types of page posters focussed on different areas of information exchange. Using this information, IAPO @ UCT could respond to

and, eventually, pre-empt information that would be of use to the stakeholders that they wanted to target.

The rest of the theoretical analysis was used to investigate the page posters to analyse their interaction on IAPO @ UCT. Networking Theory was useful to identify the nodes and supernodes on IAPO @ UCT so that the main disseminators of information could be enlisted in helping to spread information about IAPO to key stakeholders.

The Theory of Social Capital was employed to see how the page posters were getting social capital through their interactions on IAPO @ UCT. IAPO @ UCT set out to encourage and reward positive posting on the Page and suppressed negative actions by hiding inappropriate posts or Comments. This may have affected the trustworthiness of IAPO @ UCT. By promoting positive posts, IAPO encouraged these posters to post again. Page posters who made negative posts ceased to contribute again. Page likers could be encouraged to interact on a page where they know that negative Comments are not welcome as they will be protected by IAPO @ UCT from these negative commenters. However, page posters who notice that some page interactions have been hidden by the page administrators might be wary of posting their own Comments, in case they are sanctioned as well. They may also feel that it is not worth commenting if some of the Comments will be hidden anyway. It is difficult to speculate what a potential poster may feel; therefore, further investigation into the effect of hidden posts and Comments is needed.

Social Identity revealed that IAPO staff members and student assistants identified as part of IAPO and IAPO @ UCT. Student stakeholders identified IAPO and IAPO @ UCT as the same actor but did not identify themselves as a part of IAPO or IAPO @ UCT. IAPO branding and the increase of student interaction in student events may assist students in identifying as part of IAPO or IAPO @ UCT.

Social Presence showed that students responded well to the presence of IAPO stakeholders in photo albums. The presence of student pictures in IAPO @ UCT photo albums caused students, who had gone to the offline events, to want to participate in future events. Students who missed

the offline events wanted to know when the next one was occurring so that they could join in as well.

Incorporating the Virtual Community Simulation Structure from Figure 1 into the discussion, the leaders on the SNS could be the supernodes on the page. Besides the IAPO staff as IAPO @ UCT page administrators, IAPO could partner with supernodes as permanent leaders who would be able to post on the page. For example, SRC members could be requested to contribute regularly to the page posts. This would foster social capital and social identity on the page. The leaders could ensure that other users, especially new members who will bring new ideas to the community, have friendly access to the page which will increase cultural diversity (De Maggio et al., 2009; Koh et al., 2007).

In order to make sure that IAPO @ UCT is sustainable going forward, the provision of useful information that is sought by the stakeholders should continue to flow from the page. An example of this information is IAPO administrative information. Information falling into this post category was both disseminated by the page but, most importantly, was information that original page posters were requesting - via the post category, administrative questions. Other popular post categories from page posters need to be continually assessed to make sure that the information given out from the page responds to the types of information the IAPO stakeholders will find useful.

Offline information increases social presence on IAPO @ UCT. It was found that pictures from offline events made IAPO stakeholders more active on the page and indicate that they wanted to participate in future events. IAPO events should be advertised on the page before they occur and pictures from these events, with tagged IAPO stakeholders, should be posted directly after the events to ensure ongoing social presence.

Bandwidth restrictions started to decrease at UCT from early 2010 thus making it easier for UCT staff and students to access Facebook. The reliance on the ICT therefore should not be a limiting factor with regard to access to the IAPO @ UCT. Support from the ICT infrastructure remains important as it has been previously suggested that the community size needs to increase in order

to see if IAPO @ UCT will attain critical mass. New users need to be able to access Facebook in order to join the page and increase the page Likes and posts.

This case study of IAPO @ UCT investigated the online interaction of key stakeholders in a HEI and is therefore adding to the body of knowledge of HEI and Web 2.0 interaction in a developing country. The contribution is unlike the majority of research in this area i.e. in developed countries and in teaching and learning. The contribution is based on the administrative side of the HEI where the integration into the HEI was under investigation.

9 Conclusions

Internationalisation is an important development in HE not only because the demand for an international education is increasing at an accelerating rate but because cultural competence increases the employability of students in a global marketplace. Increasing the use of ICTs in HE holds the possibility of responding to an increase in the demand for internationalisation in a manageable way. The current generation of students is more comfortable with technology than ever before and it would be beneficial for HEIs to relate to the needs of their students through a medium that they are already comfortable with and log into regularly.

An online virtual community on a SNS, with which students are already registered, would be an appropriate platform to encourage the increase in internationalisation through the intercultural exchange between students. International students are often disappointed that they never had the chance to interact with the local students (and learn more about their culture) in offline interaction. In order to encourage them to interact more offline, local and international student interaction on an online virtual community could make them more aware of each other as well as offline events where they would be able to meet face to face.

IAPO at UCT was used as a case study to investigate if internationalisation could be increased through the addition of a Facebook virtual community. Through the investigation of the IAPO case study, the research question and sub-questions were addressed. The research question of “How can the use of a SNS facilitate internationalisation in a HEI?” was broken into sub-questions that were addressed by stakeholder demographics and theories relevant to social networking.

The age and gender of international students at UCT were compared with those who interacted on or Liked the IAPO @ UCT Page. The ages of the page posters were most similar to those of the international student body at UCT; however, age and gender differed dramatically when compared to the IAPO @ UCT Page Likes. Females were significantly more likely to Like the IAPO @ UCT page as well as Like the page posts.

ANT was used as the main theory in investigating the interaction of IAPO stakeholders on the Facebook Page IAPO @ UCT. Certain concepts from Networking Theory, and the theories of Social Capital, Identity and Presence were also investigated to shed light on the page interactions. The use of these theories highlighted the actors, and the interaction between the actors, involved in increasing internationalisation at UCT through the use of the SNS Facebook.

ANT showed that IAPO was the focal actor in increasing internationalisation at UCT. Through translation, IAPO set up the Problematisation through which the other actors (IAPO @ UCT, Facebook and the page posters) were encouraged into achieving the OPP of “Can IAPO @ UCT facilitate internationalisation at UCT”.

Through the use of Networking Theory, the nodes and supernodes/hubs were identified as the disseminators of information on IAPO @ UCT. Social Capital Theory highlighted examples of closure as well as intergenerational closure in the virtual community. Social Identity Theory showed that not many of the students identified with being a part of IAPO or IAPO @ UCT although staff members (permanent, temporary and even ad hoc student assistants) did identify with IAPO and IAPO @ UCT. There were examples of social presence, both of IAPO stakeholders at offline events but also of IAPO stakeholders online.

Through the investigation of the online virtual community, IAPO @ UCT, it was shown (in response to the research question) that the use of a SNS could facilitate internationalisation at a HEI.

9.1 Lessons Learned

Page insights need monitoring to see if the demographics of the individuals accurately represents the demographics of the main stakeholders or target market. Using the Friends of the page administrators and allowing for the organic growth of the Facebook Page might not be enough to accelerate the acceptance of the innovation.

Students responded well to pictures of recent events. This both made them aware of the people who attended the events that the HEI was involved in and also prompted them to attend future events hosted by the HEI.

Students did not identify themselves as being a part of IAPO. Perhaps it would suffice that they identify with the university and not just one of the departments; however, IAPO would have liked the students to feel that IAPO was a “home away from home” and was recognizable as a service provider to UCT students. In order to achieve the identification with a department or unit within a HEI (by feeling a part of the “family” or team), the department could concentrate on the dissemination of branded products.

9.2 Further Actions for IAPO

In order to ensure the continued engagement of the target stakeholders, these stakeholders need to be converted from just making occasional Likes, Comments and Shares to becoming page likers so that they can continue to Like, Comment and Share as well as see the targeted posts from the Page. This may require financial budgeting for advertising in order to target the key stakeholders through Facebook advertising.

To increase the feeling of belonging to IAPO or IAPO @ UCT, IAPO needs to increase student interaction in events and other IAPO activities. Since the only students who identified as a part of IAPO were those who worked for IAPO part time, more students need to be enlisted (as volunteers) to assist in activities that they have a vested interest in. They could then act as supernodes, disseminating information about the activities to other stakeholders as well as feeling a sense of accomplishment and ownership in their participation. IAPO could also increase its branding so that they are more identifiable across the UCT campuses and online in pictures. If students are given IAPO branded resources such as t-shirts, as soon as they pre-register, they can recognise the brand and this may be the first step in wanting to know more about what IAPO does so that they can one day feel more like a part of IAPO.

9.3 Limitations to the Research

A cost benefit analysis could be completed on a Facebook Page to see if there was financial gain in attracting international applicants to a university or an increase in the quality of the students' educational experience. This could justify requests for SNS advertising or more human resources that could be dedicated to managing the SNS accounts of the university.

The use of the Facebook API could be explored to ascertain the countries of age posters by their IP address or Facebook page likers by citizenship. This would allow the direct comparison of country between page likers and page posters.

The disparity in the age distribution of international students at the university to the Facebook Page insight likers, indicated that the bulk of the Facebook likers came from very different age groups. This unexpected age distribution would need further investigation.

9.4 Further Research

The effect of hiding Facebook page Comments and posts on trustworthiness with regard to Social Capital would be beneficial to page administrators. Hiding Facebook Comments or deleting original posts on Facebook pages could have adverse effects on how comfortable page posters feel about adding their voice to the Page. If the Page is seen as too strict, page posters may be afraid to add their Comments. If the Page is too lenient, page posters may feel the adverse effects of negative and destructive Comments. Page posts in a HEI may not need to behave in the same way as corporate pages; therefore, research into the trustworthiness of pages in a HEI environment would be beneficial to HEIs trying to engage more with their students.

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11 Addendum A

1.1. UCT's Social Networking Policy



UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN
IYUNIVESITHI YASEKAPA • UNIVERSITEIT VAN KAAPSTAD

You are about to visit a social networking site

If you are visiting this site during the day for recreational reasons, please rather do so after hours so that the bandwidth can be used instead for academic purposes.

Social networking at UCT

UCT recognises the role that social networking can play in society and on campus. However, we need to balance our academic requirements for Internet bandwidth against those for recreational surfing.

The University currently spends approximately *R8 million a year buying bandwidth*. Yet students, researchers, academic and administrative staff still struggle to use the Internet for work purposes. Recreational use of the Internet contributes significantly to the University's total Internet spend with social networking sites currently accounting for about 10% of the cost of bandwidth each year.

The university has decided that social networking sites will not be blocked. However,

- bandwidth allocation to social networking sites will be capped during the working day (week days 08:00 - 17:00), during which time the sites will remain functional, but access may be slow;
- all staff, students and third parties are bound by the [UCT policy and rules on Internet and email use](#) and the [Appropriate use of computer facilities policy](#).

Please be considerate to other users of the Internet on campus and remember to [play IT safe](#).

By clicking "*I Agree*" you acknowledge that you have read the above information.

I Agree

12 Addendum B

12.1 Questionnaire

Student Number:

1. Are you registered with a social networking site (e.g. Facebook, MySpace, Twitter): Y/N
2. If you answered no to question 1, please go to question 10. If you answered yes to question 1, which social networking sites are you registered with?
3. What do you like to use social networking sites for?
4. If you are registered with Facebook, are you aware of the International Academic Programmes Office (IAPO) Page on Facebook? If you are not registered with Facebook, please go to question 11.
5. Are you a member of the Facebook Page IAPO @ UCT?
6. If you answered yes to question 4, what do you use IAPO @ UCT for?
7. What do you generally use Facebook for?
8. How often do you log into Facebook (daily, weekly, monthly)?
9. How many Facebook friends do you have (you may give an approximate figure)? – this is the last question for you, thank you. Please feel free to join IAPO @ UCT to keep up to date with important dates, fun activities and other opportunities available from IAPO
10. If you are not registered with a social networking site, is there a reason why you have chosen not to join one?
11. Would you consider joining the social networking site Facebook?
12. If you answered yes to question 10, would you consider joining IAPO @ UCT to keep up to date with events and happenings on the UCT campus?

Thank you for taking the time to fill in the questionnaire. Please feel free to join IAPO @ UCT to keep up to date with important dates, fun activities and other opportunities available from IAPO.

13 Addendum C

The sections and structure of IAPO is further extrapolated in this addendum.

13.1 African Partnerships and Programmes and International Full Degree Students

The APP and IFD sections were managed by one manager in 2013 who reports to the IAPO director. As APP manager, she manages a coordinator, an officer and an assistant in this section. In the IFD section, she manages a coordinator who supervises an advisor and an administrator (International Academic Programmes Office, 2013).

The APP section is responsible for running existing African academic partnership programmes and actively explore the potential for, and develop, new programmes. One of these programmes is the USHEPiA programme that was a contributing factor to the inception of IAPO in 1996 (International Academic Programmes Office, 2006; International Academic Programmes Office, 2013). APP's main tasks include building external strategic linkages with African universities and maintaining connections with Africa-focused sections within UCT (International Academic Programmes Office, 2013). In addition, APP welcomes African delegations to UCT.

The IFD section's main objective is to develop strategy and provide core services that develops the academic and social aspects of the IFD student experience at UCT. In addition, IFD upholds formal relations with internal and external UCT stakeholders to address issues affecting IFD students (International Academic Programmes Office, 2013).

13.2 Finance

The IAPO Finance section consisted of the Finance manager (who reports to the IAPO Director) who line manages an Assistant Finance Manager who, in turn, supervises three Finance officers and an administrator (International Academic Programmes Office, 2013). The Finance section manages the finances for IAPO and its partnership programmes as well as providing financial services and advice to the SSA and IFD students. In addition, the Finance Administrator

administers US Federal Aid to American students who require funding to study at UCT (International Academic Programmes Office, 2013).

13.3 Mobility, Programmes and Partnerships (MPP)

The MPP section is led by a manager who reports to the IAPO director. The manager has two coordinators and an administrator (responsible for partnerships and visits) who report directly to her. One of the MPP coordinators, (SSA Academic) manages the academic requirements for the SSA students and the other coordinator (Student Life and Exchanges) sees to the non-academic aspects of the SSA programme as well as coordinating the process whereby UCT students can go on international exchanges (International Academic Programmes Office, 2013). The SSA Academic coordinator has four administrators reporting to her and the coordinator for Student Life and Exchanges has an officer and a housing administrator reporting to her (International Academic Programmes Office, 2013).

The MPP section is responsible for receiving incoming SSA students and for sending UCT students to international partner universities. MPP assists the SSA students with housing, orientation, emergency services and application support. In addition, MPP maintains strategic partnerships and linkages with key international institutions, coordinates key strategic partnership programmes and welcomes international visitors (International Academic Programmes Office, 2013).

13.4 Systems, Information and Communication (SIC)

The SIC manager reports to the IAPO director and line manages a Communications and Marketing Coordinator. The coordinator manages two receptionists at the IAPO Front Office (International Academic Programmes Office, 2013). SIC is responsible for three main areas:

1. The Front Office is the face of IAPO, receiving, answering or routing enquiries for the office in person, over the telephone or via email.
2. Communications and Marketing holds the mandate of uplifting the profile of IAPO to internal and external UCT stakeholders.

3. Systems and Information is responsible for aligning IAPO in-house systems to those available at UCT (International Academic Programmes Office, 2013)

13.5 Directorate

The IAPO director reports directly to the Deputy Vice Chancellor (DVC) responsible for *Internationalisation via an Afropolitan Niche* (International Academic Programmes Office, 2013). He line manages a special advisor (a post that was vacant for most of 2013), his personal assistant as well as all the sectional managers listed above (International Academic Programmes Office, 2013). The director's mandate is to lead IAPO in achieving its overall objectives.